

Minutes
Bluff City Board of Mayor and Aldermen
Regular Meeting
June 4, 2019

Mayor Wells called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: Carol Keith, Jeff Broyles, Ray Harrington, Eric Ward and Richard Bowling.

Prayer was given by Vice Mayor Ray Harrington, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Wells opened the floor for the following:

Discussion / Action – Appoint the Vice Mayor

Alderman Ward made a motion to appoint Ray Harrington as Vice Mayor. Second by Alderman Bowling. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Abstained, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried.

Discussion / Action – Appoint 1 Planning / Zoning Board member

Alderwoman Keith made a motion to appoint Amanda Carrier. City Attorney Paul Frye stated it has to be a Board member. Alderwoman Keith made a motion to appoint Jeff Broyles. Second by Alderman Bowling. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Yes, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Abstained, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried.

Discussion / Action – Dave Wilson, Engineer with Mattern & Craig

Mr Wilson presented a list of updates on the projects to the BMA. Mr Wilson stated that the first one was for the USDA-RUSRD funded project. Mr Wilson stated I know we have new board members so I just included all 3 of the potential contracts and wanted to update them as to where we are at as of today. The first contract, which was to replace the pump stations, was completed in January of 2018 by Iron Mountain. Subsequent to contract 1 we did have a bid for contract 2 for comprehensive water and sewer utility replacements throughout the system which is the ongoing project and we are under agreement with Thomas Construction Company for that work. The bid price for that work was \$1,914,821.00 and the construction contract remains the same as of today's date. The completion dates for that work were May 23, 2019 and June 22, 2019. Mr Wilson stated that we are going to surpass those dates by roughly 30 to 45 days for many different reasons. Mr Wilson reported that after the latest pay request we have about \$537,000.00 left on the contract prior to completion. Most of this is going to be restoration of existing items such as curbs, ditches, landscaping whatever has been torn up during the project, plus paving. Mr Wilson reported that there is still roughly \$175,000.00 in that amount for additional water line replacements for the project. Mr Wilson stated that they have discussed how to utilize the remaining funds and one suggestion was the replacement of water lines along Main Street. This comes for (Public Works Supervisor) Mr Moultrie's records of where we are having the most water leaks. They have also discussed the possibility of changing the location of the forced main discharge from the garage pump station and placing it into Lakeview Drive directly bypassing the Igloo pump station. The approximate cost to do this would be \$76,480.00. The contractor would have to look at it to confirm his estimated cost. This would help with the overflows at the pump station. Alderman Ward asked if we were sure that Bristol's pump station could handle that.

Mr Wilson stated it is now. We are not changing anything but the route. Alderman Ward stated this is to eliminate the overflows and the pump trucks we have now. Mr Wilson stated that's the idea. Alderwoman Keith stated you are saying that people won't be experiencing the overflows. Mr Wilson stated that's what we hope. I can't say that will never happen because so many things could happen. Mr Wilson stated that we need to look at replacing approximately 200 water meters at this time. Any replacement of water meters is a good thing as meters historically under read and if they are new it benefits everyone.

The remaining part of the project, which is contract 3, is the proposed improvements at the water plant. With the changes in the operations at the plant and Tina Grindstaff assisting, she and Allen Moultrie have evaluated what had been proposed with the previous project and where they are now. Ms Grindstaff's recommendations were basically what had been previously proposed with the exception of the larger water tank. She thinks that with changes made in the system we have recovered a substantial amount of the ability to feed water through the elimination of water leaks. She recommends an increase in our wet well at the plant can serve a dual purpose by giving us additional storage we need and give enough time for proper chlorine contact time. Mayor Wells stated that our water tank has overflowed due to the additional pressure. Alderman Broyles stated that many citizens are concerned about the paving needed due to the construction. Mr Wilson stated it would probably be mid to late July getting all the paving completed.

Citizen Comments- First Session

Cathleen King of 4234 Bluff City Hwy. voiced concern about the request for rezoning the property next to her. She stated that they have to listen to trucks and trailers coming in and out late at night. She asked that they not allow the property to be rezoned to B-3. She voiced concern about the things being placed on the sight.

Troy Rutledge owner of the property Mrs King was speaking of was present to request the property be rezoned commercial. Mr Rutledge stated the Board (Planning Commission) recommended it along with the lady from the state. We would like for it to be not split zoned and all zoned commercial. Mr Rutledge stated that he had kept in touch with the police department during their moving process. Mr Rutledge stated we do not pull in at night; we shut off at 6:00 at night.

Julie Carty of 209 Smith Street Ext. stated I was at the Planning and Zoning meeting and it makes no sense to her that it shouldn't be changed to all business because of all the business around it. If he is bringing in revenue for the city give the man a chance and if it becomes a problem discuss it then.

Kathy Leonard of 316 McClelland Ln, stated that she appreciated that a dumpster has been at the house next to her and they are cleaning up. She voiced concern about the rats coming from a trailer and possibly from the car lot down there. Mrs Leonard stated that there is an ordinance about cats and dogs saying they are to have shots and tagged. She asked that they do something about the cats, rats, and the buildings. Mayor Wells stated they are working on it.

Connie Leonard of 314 Main Street congratulated the new and returning board members and stated she looked forward to what they were going to bring to the town.

Connie Leonard stated that the citizens would be glad to work with them in any way. Ms Leonard thanked them for trying to do something about the rats.

Dennis Prater of 702 East Myrtle, 37601 stated that he has seen some of them before and offered congratulations to particularly Carol Keith for her election. Mr Prater stated she is someone who cares about what is true and right.

Kimberly Arrowood of 312 Harr Drive stated I am here to own the fact that you all told everybody that I sued the City for 30 plus thousand dollars. I am just here to own the fact that I did sue the City and I tried to sue your insurance but when you falsify records and the insurance denies it there is nothing I can do but sue the citizens. Mrs Arrowood asked if they were going to reduce the water hookup rates. Vice Mayor Harrington stated that it is being looked into on the next budget. Mrs Arrowood stated that the plumber that worked at her home stated that it looked like the city's line was kind of collapsing and if it did in the future it could cause another overflow. Mrs Arrowood stated that they may want to keep a close eye on that line because if that line ever makes my home over flow, I am going to sue you again.

Becky Buchanan of 750 Drybranch Rd congratulated the new board members. Mrs Buchanan stated Alderwoman Keith you promised that you would lower the water bills, my next bill will be in a month. Is my bill going to be lower than what it was this past month? Alderwoman Keith stated I did not say I promise I will lower your water bill. Mayor Wells stated let her finish her 3 minutes and then you can have yours. Mrs Buchanan stated you said you would get the water bills lowered. You sued the city and won and many times you talked about the people having a hard time paying their bills they had to choose between food, water bills or medicine. Did you take any of that money you won off the City and help these people pay their water bill? Alderwoman Keith stated if I can answer that question, furthermore it is none of your business. Mayor Wells said let her finish her 3 minutes. Mrs Keith stated she asked me a question. Mayor Wells stated you need to let her finish her 3 minutes and then you can do it. Mrs Buchanan stated it may not be none of my business but the money you got from the city does affect the city residents. Mrs Keith stated mam you don't know what you are talking about. Mayor Wells stated okay wait a minute you need to finish your 3 minutes and then you can speak. Mrs Keith asked if this is the way the meeting is to be conducted. Mrs Buchanan stated we are supposed to ask questions. Mayor Wells stated let her have her 3 minutes. Mrs Buchanan stated I am waiting for my water bill to get lowered next month.

Alderwoman Keith stated to answer your question, further more it is none of your business, and I am not being ugly. I did not say that I would lower the water bills. I said that we would look into it and see what could be done. I have been appointed to this board to do what's best for the people and the employees. I am not here for any debates with you or anybody else. This is a business and we want to get things done not to come back here and act ugly. I am here to stand up for what is right and not to argue with you and nobody else.

Sandra Madison of 312 Highland Drive stated I just want to tell my sister and the new board members that I am proud of you and to stand.

Discussion / Action – First reading on Ordinance 2019-001

City Attorney Paul Frye read the ordinance which is to adopt a Continuing Budget and Tax Rate for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2019. Motion to approve was made by Alderman Bowling. Second by Vice Mayor Harrington. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Abstained, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried.

Discussion / Action – First Reading Ordinance 2019-002

City Attorney Paul Frye read the ordinance which is to rezone certain property from R-1 to B-3 within the corporate limits of the Town of Bluff City and amending Ordinance 95-012 the Zoning Ordinance Map. Vice Mayor Harrington asked for clarification on B-3 verses B-1 and B-2. City Attorney Paul Frye stated it was on the sheet they had. Vice Mayor Harrington asked if it was the Zoning Board that recommended we go to B-3. Mr Frye stated yes. The process is the Planning Commission recommends it to be rezoned but it takes 2 readings of the BMA and a Public Hearing. Alderman Ward stated he had looked at this and where you have the houses right next to the B-3, he would like to see it zoned B-1 instead of B-3. Mr Ward stated that he knows they have to vote it up or down but he would like for it to go back to the Zoning Board. Vice Mayor Harrington stated I would agree with that. Alderman Broyles stated I just don't have enough information to be able to make a decision. Alderman Bowling stated I don't believe they had enough information at the Zoning meeting as to what it intel's. Man from audience (Mr Rutledge) stated that every question that was asked was answered by the lady from the State. Motion to send it back to Planning and Zoning for considering B-1 was made by Vice Mayor Harrington. Second by Alderwoman Keith. City Attorney Paul Frye stated this needs to be voted up or down because if it is voted down there can be an application made to the Planning Commission for B-1. Alderman Broyles stated after reading the information sheet he would almost approve the B-3. It is definitely not R-1. Alderman Ward stated you meet in the middle and do B-1. Alderman Broyles stated the B-1 is a better description of what he understands. Mayor Wells stated that her understanding was in B-3 you can have any type of business even a junk yard. Alderwoman Keith asked if any of them had driven by and looked at the place. Board members stated yes. Mr Rutledge asked if they could approve B-1 now. He was informed that he has to submit an application for B-1. City Attorney Paul Frye stated correct. Motion not to approve was made by Vice Mayor Harrington. Second by Alderman Ward. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Yes, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried. Request was denied.

Discussion / Action – First Reading Ordinance 2019-003

City Attorney Paul Frye read the ordinance which amends to Town of Bluff City Zoning Ordinance 95-012 – Article VIII: Area, Yard, and Height Requirements. This will delete the Non-Residential area yard and height requirements contained in the Article VIII in its entirety. This is just cleaning up the ordinance. Motion to approve was made by Vice Mayor Harrington. Second by Alderman Broyles. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Yes, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried.

Discussion / Action – TCRS Employer Contribution Rate Certification – Sharon Greene, CMFO

Ms Greene stated that in the past 2 years the city has been contributing 6.17% of the employee's wages which is the city's part. The auditors reported that we have overfunded as where it is usually a liability, but the city treats it as an asset. Our current minimum rate from TCRS is 0%. That is what they are saying that is the minimum we have to have. The auditors suggested that we lower the 6.17% and TCRS (Tenn. Consolidated Retirement) recommends, even if your minimum rate is 0, you should never go below 2% even if you are well funded, because of the volatility of the market. TCRS has a base return on the stock market for investments of 7.25%. As of June 30, 2018 the market showed an 8.19%. This year it looks like it is going to be lower. This is some information on how they base the percentage they recommend us to do. You have a choice to make whatever percent you want to put in the budget for this next year. Vice Mayor Harrington asked, what is your recommendation? Ms Greene stated I would recommend a 3 to 4%. TCRS recommends going to at least 2%. Alderman Ward stated we were at 6%. Ms Greene stated we were at 6.17%. Vice Mayor Harrington stated they are saying we have overfunded it so they are recommending that we not put anything in it. Ms Greene stated your unfunded balance shows as a liability, and most places with their high payouts are underfunded, but where Bluff City is overfunded it shows as an asset. It is better to have an asset than a liability. Vice Mayor Harrington asked, what is the pleasure of the Board? Alderman Broyles stated I just want us to be able to take care of our folks and have it be financially feasible. Ms Greene stated right now you only have 6 people drawing retirement that has retired. You have 38 inactive people that will be able to draw and you have 18 active employees that can retire and draw retirement. Mayor Wells asked that we let them know the dollar amount we have in there at the present time. Ms Greene stated \$1,371,000.00. Alderman Broyles stated that the standard contribution at his place of employment is about 3%. Vice Mayor Harrington made a motion to go with 3%. Second by Alderwoman Keith. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Yes, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried.

Report from Mayor/City Manager – Irene Wells

Mayor Wells reported that we have made more headway on the Boardwalk. We have changed most of the planks and changed all of the lights. We are saving money by changing to the led bulbs. We have the stain paid for but have to wait 2 to 3 weeks before putting it on. We are doing some painting.

Mayor Wells stated that in reference to the contracted work that is going on, we have been getting a lot of phone calls from customers. They have been understanding, but their main concern is that the contractors are going to take care of putting things back as it is supposed to be. They (the contractors) assured me that everything is going to be put back as it is supposed to be.

Mayor Wells asked Public Works Supervisor Allen Moultrie to explain an incident that happened over the past weekend. Mr Moultrie stated that what he believed happened was that someone got stuck inside the girl's bathroom and they had to punch through the door to get that person out. We will have to purchase another door but there was no damage inside the bathroom.

Mayor Wells stated that the men have been working very hard. Mr Moultrie did not have time to do a written report for tonight.

Report from City Attorney Paul Frye

Mr Frye reported that we have collected approximately \$1,100.00 in delinquent taxes this month.

Report from City Recorder/ CMFO – Sharon Greene

Ms Greene reported the following fund balances as of April, 2019: General Fund - \$1,431,593.00, Sanitation Fund - \$5,500.00, Special Police Fund - \$14,199.00, Debt Service Fund- \$145,191.00, Sinking Fund - \$3,095.00, Water /Sewer Fund. Motion to approve the financial report was made by Vice Mayor Harrington. Second by Alderman Bowling. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Yes, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Motion carried.

Comments from Board Members

Alderwoman Keith stated I would like to thank God for this opportunity. I thank my husband, my family and the people that voted for me. I want the citizens to know I will stand up for the people and also for the employees. I want everybody treated fair. My door is open. I want us to move forward and work together. Unless it is state mandated I will not vote for any increases because the citizens are struggling now. I believe we can all come together and agree to disagree and not to be throwing stones and being ugly because we are not going to get anything done. Thank you for this opportunity.

Alderman Broyles stated I have been praying for this moment. Mr Broyles read a statement thanking God and the people that supported him in the election and in advance for their continued support. Mr Broyles stated that he will be an active board member. I will listen and be attentive and professional at all times. He will be a team player and will become extremely familiar with the towns business and processes and procedures. I will be accessible and dependable. I want to know what the citizens think. Mr Broyles asked that they utilize him. He asked for people to lay aside past differences, we have too much work to do. Mr Broyles asked the Board to make him a sponsor or co-sponsor for the Veterans Memorial immediately. I am working on the Patriot Trail Project with the County. Mr Broyles asked if, whenever possible, workshops be scheduled in the evenings so he can attend as he works full time. Mr Broyles thanked everyone for their attention and for attending this evening.

Vice Mayor Harrington thanked everyone for coming and stated that he feels that the outcome of the election was to the best of Bluff City. He stated he looks forward to working with Carol, Jeff, Eric and Richard. I think we are on the right path it just takes time to get there.

Alderman Ward thanked everyone for their support and having confidence in him to continue doing this as he enjoys it and looks forward to working with them.

Alderman Bowling thanked everyone for coming and stated he wished we had standing room only. Mr Bowling congratulated the new members and stated they would all work together to make our town better.

Report for Chief of Police Greg Depew

Chief Depew congratulated the new board members and stated he looks forward to working with them.

Chief Depew presented the Monthly Report for May, 2019 (SEE ATTACHCED)

Mayor Wells asked if he could remember how many drug arrests they had in the last 2 months. Chief Depew stated that probably in the last 3 months they have had around 12 to 15, but he would have to go back and look at his records.

Alderwoman Keith asked the Chief to explain about the GPS. Chief Depew stated that it is something that monitors the location of the city vehicles. Alderwoman Keith asked him if he monitored it. Chief Depew stated I don't. GPS is not going to affect my duties as far as Chief or the Police Department whether they are there or whether they are not. We are going to perform at a high level the best we can regardless. Mrs Keith stated so that's just something that's needed. Mayor Wells stated it helps with our insurance and if you have an accident, and you are out on the road by yourself. Chief Depew stated it can check your speed. Mrs Keith asked is that why, because of insurance. Member of audience stated Sullivan County dispatches and they know where those cars are. Mayor Wells stated yes they do. Alderman Bowling stated good job Chief.

Mayor Wells asked the Chief to discuss the issue on Carter Street about the overgrown lot. Mayor Wells stated we actually cut down the grass and are sending her a bill. Chief Depew stated they were in touch with her and she is going to refund the city.

Chief Depew stated that the lady mentioned about 4 months (earlier in this meeting). Chief Depew stated that the people that were living there were being forcibly evicted and were avoiding answering the door and very seldom there. The lady that owns the house does not live in the state of Tennessee, so it has made it very difficult. That is why it seems so long on the time frame.

Report from Public Works Supervisor – Allen Moultrie.

Mr Moultrie congratulated everybody on the Board and the new members.

Mr Moultrie reported that everything seems to be going well in both departments. Mr Moultrie stated that he hopes they band together and keep things headed in the same direction we are going right now as he sees it as a good direction.

Old Business – None

New Business

Alderwoman Keith stated that she would like to see about the water connection rates. Mrs Keith presented rates from Elizabethton stating it was \$30 and one from Johnson City that it is like \$30 or \$40. Mrs Keith stated we now currently charge \$150.00 for home owners and \$350.00 for renters. Mayor Wells stated that they were going to bring it up during the budget workshop. City

Recorder/CMFO Sharon Greene asked Mrs Keith if she could get a copy of those rates. Mrs Keith stated yes. Ms Greene stated she could make copies for everyone for the workshop.

Vice Mayor Harrington stated, that in reference to Alderman Broyles and the Veterans Memorial, would he like to co-chair the committee. Alderman Broyles stated as a co- sponsor Alderman Bowling is head of it and stated sure anytime. Alderman Broyles stated that he will bring it up to the sponsors of the Patriot Trail and see if they can tie it in.

Citizen Comments – Second Session

Connie Leonard of 314 Main St stated I want to ask one thing with the water rates. The citizens inside the city are paying like double and triple sewer rates so that is one reason the rates are high. Ms Leonard asked if they would look into as it is the sewer usage making the bills so high. Ms Leonard asked for clarification on the retirement fund that went from 6 something to 3 and asked if they were decreasing the amount that they are going to put in and will it balance out for the employees eventually. Vice Mayor Harrington stated yes that they have \$1,300,000.00. Ms Leonard stated that as Mr Broyles said, it would be better for some of these special called meetings and workshops to have them in the evenings so the citizens can participate in it. We would appreciate that.

Kimberly Arrowood of 312 Harr Drive stated Alderman Broyles I agree with you 100% that the workshops should be done in the evenings. Mrs Arrowood stated Alderwoman Keith I have been out there with you and I know you never told anyone you would lower their water bills. She thanked Alderwoman Keith for her professionalism and how she handled herself tonight.

Cathy King congratulated the board members saying we need to have faith in the people chosen to work for our city. Mrs King thanked them for listening to her. She stated it is important to consider their homes, family and neighbors. Mrs King stated I don't want to deny him a business. I want him to promise to do what he said he was going to do and not make the place a dump. I want to work this out peacefully.

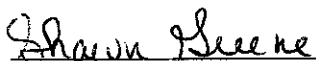
Alderwoman Keith asked if there was a way to change the early morning meetings. Mayor Wells stated sure. Vice Mayor Harrington stated tomorrow's meeting is because of Pat Hardy's schedule. Mayor Wells stated they would work on trying to have them in the evening.

With no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by Vice Mayor Harrington. Second by Alderman Ward. Vote was as follows: Alderwoman Keith – Yes, Alderman Broyles- Yes, Vice Mayor Harrington – Yes, Alderman Ward – Yes, Alderman Bowling – Yes. Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.



Irene Wells, Mayor/ City Manager

Attest this 4th day of 2019



Sharon Greene, City Recorder/CMFO



Bluff City Police Department



MONTHLY REPORT
2019 May-19

Year Month

NUMBER OF:	CITY	PINEY	COUNTY	TOTAL
CALLS FOR ASSISTANT(S)	97	68	0	165
ISSUED CITATION(S)	32	32		64
WARNING CITATION(S)	0	0	0	0
PATROLED MILE(S)	3040	1310	0	4350
ARREST(S)	5	4	0	9
OFFENSE REPORT(S)	8	12	0	20
ALARM(S)	1	2	0	3
ACCIDENT(S)	5	2	0	7
ANIMAL CALL(S)	1	0	0	1
MSD REPORT(S)	4	1	0	5
FUNERAL ESCORT(S)	1	0	0	1
DOMESTIC ASSAULT(S)	0	1	1	2
VEHICLE SEIZURE(S)	0	0	0	0
MISSING PERSON(S)	0	0	0	0
D.U.I.(S)	0	1	0	0
DRUG VIOLATION(S)	2	2	0	4
USE OF FORCE REPORT(S)	0	0	0	0

approved by: *Christy May* Date: 3-Jun-19