

Minutes
Bluff City Board of Mayor and Aldermen
Special Called Meeting
September 30, 2024

Vice Mayor Keith called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 p.m. Vice Mayor Keith asked for a moment of silence for the people that have been affected by the floods.

Members present: Lori Staton, Carol Keith, Ben Adams, and Lisa Arnold

Prayer was given by Carol Keith, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Deputy Chief Dunbar.

Vice Mayor Keith opened the floor for the following:

First Session of Public Comments:

Michelle Roberts of 231 Lakeview Drive voiced concern about public comments at meetings. Mrs Roberts stated Mayor Broyles had been questioned about TDEC's assessment of proposed communities and he said TDEC had approved. This information was not correct. Mrs Roberts asked if there was a contingency plan for the absence of City Attorney.

Carolyn Payne of 4818 Bluff City Hwy voiced concern that the Agenda stated on the advice of counsel, and our counsel does not show up. Mrs Payne voiced concern about the donated money for Heritage Days that was turned down and asked the Board to look into it.

Julie Venable of 209 Smith Street Ext stated our Mayor/City Manager needs to go. He is insulting.

Matt Chase of 4406 Bluff City Hwy stated you really have some good public works people. I have talked to the Mayor and he says we are working on it. I would like to know a plan.

Vice Mayor Keith stated we hear you and will try our best to get you some answers.

Discussion- Address Formal Complaint Submitted to the Board by Lt Smith

This occurred on September 13, 2024. Alderman Adams stated we wanted to have this meeting a whole lot sooner, but the Mayor would not put it on the Agenda. Alderwoman Staton said Chief Depew was on vacation and could not be here, they could call him and he would take the first flight back.

Lt Smith told the Board what happened. Lt Smith stated I was off that day but went by to drop off the driving school docket to Jeanann. The Mayor came in and told him he needed to speak to him. Lt Smith stated he was rude to him and said he had sent an e-mail to him about his vacation time and asked him to schedule some immediately. I apologized and said I forgot to respond to this one. Mr Smith informed the Mayor that his child was to be born in February and he wants to use his time for that. Mr Smith continued to explain the episode. Lt Smith read an email from Mayor Broyles giving him information on the Formal Complaint Process. The last step is to take it to the City Manager if other department heads did not take care of it. Lt Smith stated my question is when a complaint is filed against you, how do you review your own complaint.

Alderwoman Staton stated that was a very good question. Alderman Adams stated the Town Manager and Mayor should not be the same person. Lt Smith voiced concern about the joke showing the cruiser floating down the river in Elizabethton. Alderwoman Staton and Vice Mayor Keith had more questions about the incident.

Alderman Adams asked if this had happened with other employees. Alderman Adams stated we value every employee and they can come to me at any time. Mr Adams asked if they are considering termination. We definitely need to hire a Town Manager. We need to look into what we need to do. Mrs Staton reported that there was a regular meeting tomorrow.

Second Session—Public Comments

James Roberts of 231 Lakeview Drive stated you posed a question on how to proceed. I want to help you with that. Mr Roberts read the TCA Code in reference to that procedure. Alderman Adams stated it could take 6 months to 1 year to accomplish it doing it the way he described to remove the Mayor. This is why we need to split this position. Removal of the Mayor and removal of the Town Manager are two very different processes.

Carolyn Payne of 4818 Bluff City Hwy voiced concern about employees being afraid of losing their jobs. Mrs Payne stated aldermen can ask for something to be put on the Agenda. Vice Mayor Keith stated we are very concerned and will follow through on what we need to do.

Brian Hunt of 191 Lakeview Dr. asked if the Board is held responsible for every decision that you all vote on under the Mayor's and City Managers advice. Mr Hunt voiced concern about the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr Hunt stated as of now I am resigning from the Planning Commission because I am not going to be responsible.

Julie Venable of 209 Smith St. Ext. stated there is another Kevin Smith that is on the Planning Commission and I asked him about it and basically it is not good what he said. Ms Venable stated that MTAS had said do not have your Mayor be your City Manager. Ms Venable voiced concern about the lawyer.

Michelle Roberts of 231 Lakeview Dr. stated to Alderman Adams that he had asked Lt Smith if he had seen other employees being treated badly. Mrs Roberts stated at the meeting last time, I watched the Mayor's actions with the Chief of Police. No one should be talked to that way.

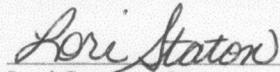
Dave Harmon asked how long does a vote last as they voted 2 or 3 years ago to hire a City Manager. Why can't you do it now.

Vice Mayor Keith stated we will look into all this because we want everybody treated fair.

Alderman Staton thanked everyone for coming and giving them a chance, stating we just want to serve.

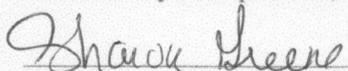
Alderman Adams thanked everyone for coming.

With no other business, Mayor Staton adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.



Lori Staton, Mayor

This 30th day of September, 2025



Sharon Greene, Recorder / CMFO