A WORKSHOP OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY REGARDING OPIOID FUNDS CONVENED AT 4:00 PM ON JANUARY 15, 2026, IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIA WEB-X.

PRESENT: Mayor Ryan Neal, City Manager Phillip Jarrell, City Attorney Bill File, and the Mayor's and CM's Assistant Susan Miller. Council Members: Natalie Coots, Kip Buchanan, Nancy Shoemaker-Dingess, Frank Williams, Janine Bullock, Sherrie Hunter, and Cody Reedy. The following City employees were present: IT Tech Keith Carter, Director of P&R Leslie Baker, Chief Dean Bailey with Beckley PD, and Beckley Events Coordinator Jill Moorefield. ABSENT: Evan Dewey Recorder Treasurer. Guest speakers: Jay Phillips of Seed Sower, Kelly Elkins of Appalachian Regional Hospital, Kellie Gunnoe of Raleigh County Prevention Coalition, and Greg Duckworth of the Raleigh County Commission and the WV First Foundation.

The Mayor reminded everyone that this is a Workshop. No votes will be taken and no decisions will be made. He called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The public had the option to join the meeting in person, listen by WEB-X from their computer, or listen by phone, using the weblink or phone number provided the day of the meeting on the City's webpage at Beckley.org or the City's Facebook page.

You may view the workshop by logging on to Beckley.org or going to the City's Facebook page. It is open to the public, but there will be no public comments. The Mayor said that all members of Council were present.

The only item on the agenda was the opioid funds. City Manager Jarrell said that he and Angela King met with the three-member advisory panel he organized consisting of Kelly Elkins, Kellie Gunnoe, and Jay Phillips. Mr. Jarrell said he has also discussed Opioid Fund distribution with Greg Duckworth, a member of the Raleigh County Commission, who is also chair of the WV First Foundation (WVFF). He said WVFF requires recipients of the settlement funds, such as the City, to report to WVFF the names of agencies receiving these funds and to state approved agencies the City approved to disburse funds to and the success rate of the usage of the funds. This allows WVFF to gather data to use for efficacy. Mr. Jarrell said twenty-five applicants have applied for the City's opioid funds. The City has received approximately $3.7M of opioid settlement money thus far to be disbursed to applicants.

Mr. Jarrell said that Council previously decided that it would be the group to approve all disbursements from this fund, rather than allowing a third party such as the United Way to manage the disbursements for the City. He said that Council also decided there would be no minimum or maximum amount of opioid settlement funds the qualifying organizations could apply for.

Mr. Jarrell said that to ensure fairness, he thinks restrictions should be put on the process and funds should be disbursed over the course of a five-year period. The funds may total $4M. City Manager Jarrell said that a maximum of $400K should go towards City departmental improvements to help combat the opioid problem either through treatment, prevention, or assisting with recovery. He said that a maximum of $400K should go to 501(c)(3) organizations the first year. Mr. Jarrell suggested that the first year of distributions should include the following restrictions. Organizations applying for funds should 1) be qualified as a 501(c)(3) organization a minimum of five years; 2) be located in Beckley City limits; 3) not use funds for capital improvements or capital equipment; 4) not use funds for salary supplements. No grant award should exceed $25,000 in to any applicant. Qualifying applicants are to submit a one paragraph descriptive project narrative.

Applicants are not required to resubmit financials, etc. City Manager Jarrell said that he has learned a lot through this process and these are his recommendations for at least the first year. Next, Jay Phillips of Seed Sower, Inc. spoke. He said that he and the other two members of the panel were happy to assist with this project and are available to continue offering assistance and guidance along the way. He said that the panel was asked to evaluate the merit of the applications. Mr. Jarrell said that he and the panel are working on a matrix to use in the qualification process.

Mr. Jarrell said that last night the Federal Government stopped grants that employed people like Heather Williams who works from Beckley PD location but is employed by WV Sober Living/Police With Peers. When officers contact individuals on the street who need detox and/or rehabilitation services, Heather assists in finding placement for these individuals. Chief Bailey gave Council a sheet containing the information and data resulting from this work. The Federal Government reinstated these grants this morning. However, the grant that funds Heather's position is supported through September 2026. Mr. Jarrell said opioid money may need to be used for people in positions such as this if grant money is eliminated.

Next, Mr. Greg Duckworth spoke first on behalf of the WV First Foundation and said that the data it complies regarding the success will be helpful. He said these reports are due at the end of the year. Evidence-based data is required. He said opioid funds should continue to be disbursed for the next seven to ten years. He doesn't know how much more money will be disbursed. Next, he spoke on behalf of the Raleigh County Commission and said that he is glad to see that the City is taking its time the first year of disbursing the funds. He said the County also put stipulations in place. Mr. Jay Quesenberry, Raleigh County Administrator, shared the County's opioid application. Mr. Jarrell expressed appreciation to Mr. Duckworth and the members of the panel for their assistance.

Mr. Jarrell said that he would like to send letters to the qualifying applicants next week asking them to submit a paragraph describing their projects. Mr. Jarrell said he is very much in support of back to work programs such as Workforce WV, Jobs For Hope, and prevention programs. He said these programs are of great interest to him and the City may want to consider working with these organizations and hiring individuals who have completed their program(s). He said they would be drug tested the same as all City employees.

With there being no further business to discuss, the Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn the Workshop. Councilwoman Bullock made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Councilman Reedy. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

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Mayor City Manager