

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, January 4, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Joseph Hunnicutt, William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Terry Roop

Also Present: E. W. Ward, City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by the City Manager and was followed by the pledge led by Police Chief Randy Mullins.

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the December 7, 2010 meeting as presented.

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There was no response to the Mayor's call for visitors.

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The first item on Council's agenda was the discussion of a funding offer from the Virginia Department of Health.

Mr. Ward had advised Council at their last meeting of the two offers the City had received from the Virginia Department of Health for water projects with 70% to be loan money and 30% forgivable grant money. At that meeting, Council had requested Mr. Ward to try to get an extension on the deadline of December 22nd. The two projects the City Administration had chosen were the Hamner Hill/Poplar Street Water Line Replacement Project and the Big Stone Gap-Norton Interconnect Project.

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Mr. Ward advised that he had secured an extended deadline on these offers until January 7, 2010 and had talked with the Director of the Program. He was advised by the Director that the Hamner Hill Project ranked very high in their system. The City Manager advised that his staff had worked to see what type of savings the Big Stone Gap - Norton Interconnect Project would have compared to the Hamner Hill/Poplar Street Water Line Replacement Project. Their conclusions were that the Hamner Hill Project would save approximately \$16,000 annually for the City.

He then presented a PowerPoint presentation showing a Debt Funding Scenario and advised Council that his recommendation was to proceed with the Hamner Hill/Poplar Street Water Line Replacement Project which consists of \$633,515 of 3% loan for a term of 30 years and \$271,507 of principal forgiveness and to advise the Health Department of the City's decision to do so.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go forward with the Hamner Hill/Poplar Street Water Line Replacement Project as presented by the City Manager.

At this time, Councilman Hunnicutt left the meeting.

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Council had been furnished with information regarding a proposed expansion by the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Authority from 4 million gallons to 6 million gallons per day. The City was approached by Mr. Mark Hollyfield, Executive Director of C-N-W, inquiring how much, if any, additional capacity the City would be interested in purchasing if this expansion takes place.

The City consulted with Mattern & Craig and Mr. Dave Wilson, a representative of Mattern & Craig, was present at tonight's meeting. Mr. Wilson evaluated this request and made the recommendation that the City purchase at least a minimum of 845,000 gallons extra capacity.

Following a brief discussion in which the City Manager asked Council for guidance as how to move forward on this item, it was the consensus of Council for the City to purchase a minimum of 845,000 gallons with a potential of purchasing an additional capacity if it is available. Council would also like to have Mr. Hollyfield come to a future meeting and present the expansion plan to them.

Mr. Ward advised he would send Mr. Hollyfield the City's request with a copy of Mr. Wilson's letter showing how this figure was determined.

Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Wilson for the information he shared with Council tonight.

Council had been presented with A Resolution Authorizing a Tentative Award on the Upper Norton Dam Project.

Mr. Ward advised that a bid opening on this project was held at 2:00 p.m. on December 9, 2010 and the low bid in the amount of \$ 1,597,748 was from Summers-Taylor, Inc. of Elizabethton, Tennessee.

The City's engineer on this project, Thompson and Litton, have stated that the Summers-Taylor bid is a good bid and they have the ability and qualifications to do this project. The reason the resolution is authorizing a tentative award is because the bid has not yet been approved by Rural Development.

Mr. Ward advised there will be some surplus funds remaining and he hopes these funds may be used on other projects. He advised he is setting up a meeting with Rural Development to see if this can be done.

Following a discussion during which he discussed the various projects on which these surplus funds could be used, a motion was made by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing a Tentative Award on the Upper Norton Dam Project to Summers-Taylor, Incorporated in the amount of \$1,597,748. (Insert)

In their packets, Council had a Resolution of the City of Norton to Apply for Funding from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation – Recreational Trails Program.

Mr. Ward advised there is some nice land adjacent to the City's old sewer plant property in Ramsey and a walking trail could be implemented starting at the Norton Community Center site, going over to Round Town, and on down into the Ramsey Area. The City Administration sought assistance from Mattern & Craig and a landscape firm and a copy of a Feasibility Study prepared by Mattern & Craig is enclosed in Council's packet. The Department of Conservation and Recreation has a funding package available

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and the City would like to apply for \$100,000 to assist with the completion of this River Walk Trail Project.

Following a discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the City of Norton to Apply for Funding From the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation – Recreational Trails Program. (Insert)

In their packets, Council had been given a copy of a memorandum from Chris Starnes, Transportation Planning Manager of the Lenowisco Planning District Commission.

In this memo, Mr. Starnes advised that Lenowisco is in partnership with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on a four year Regional Long-Range Rural Transportation Plan. This plan will focus on identified needs and deficiencies that exists in the rural roadway network in the Lenowisco district. Council needs to take no action tonight; however, Mr. Ward went over the highlights of Lenowisco's Long Range Transportation Plan.

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Following this presentation, Council was asked to give their comments or additions to this plan to the City Manager, Mr. Ramey, or Mr. Starnes.

Enclosed in packets were proposed amendments to the City of Norton Flood Plain Ordinance.

Mr. Ward advised that the City had their flood plain maps updated this year in order to continue to obtain National Flood Plain Insurance. The City also had to update the Flood Plain Ordinance and the changes, which were mostly definitions, had to be approved by FEMA. Mr. Collins, the City's Building Official, has updated this ordinance and has obtained FEMA's approval. Now, Council needs to adopt it. A copy was sent to the City Attorney for review and he advised that Mr. Collins had done a good job on this. This ordinance needs to be adopted by February 18, 2011. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on January 13th and Council needs to conduct one at their next meeting.

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Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council for the City Manager to schedule a public hearing for their January 18, 2011 meeting.

There was request for a refund for erroneously assessed 2010 personal property taxes in the amount of \$59.20 to Pamela Hopkins per a request from the Commissioner of Revenue and City Treasurer.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to refund \$59.20 to Pamela Hopkins for 2010 personal property taxes.

Council had a request for a water tap for Rick McArthur at 8546 Ramsey Road. Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve one water tap for Mr. Rick McArthur at 8546 Ramsey Road.

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In their packets, Council had a request for a check made payable to Estes Brothers in the amount of \$109,528.21 for the Josephine Sewer Extension Project Payment Request #5 dated December 8, 2010 and a transfer to the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$395,000 to cover payroll dated December 20, 2010.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the above check to Estes Brothers and the transfer to Norton City Schools as specified above. (Insert – Councilman Roop’s Disclosure Statement)

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section No. 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

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Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go back into open meeting.

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Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

The Clerk polled each member of Council as to the Certification of Closed Meeting with each answering yes.

The Clerk then read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

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In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised that Financial Disclosure Forms are due January 15, 2011 and the City’s Financial Audit for the year ended June 30, 2010 will be presented to Council at the next Council meeting.

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In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw advised that the City has obtained a general release on the Glass Machinery litigation.

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In comments from Council members, Councilman Caruso advised he had met with George Hershel of the U. S. Forest Service regarding a trail issue and Pickem Ridge Trail. He would like for City staff to work with him and Mr. Hershel to obtain an easement. He also would like Council to give the City Administration direction for City employees to work with Mr. Hershel in order to connect all trail systems together.

The U. S. Forest Service is moving out of Wise within the next three months and he would like to see if we can get them to relocate within the City. He was advised by the Assistant City Manager, Mr. Ramey, that he has met with their staff in the past regarding this and has heard nothing else from them.

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Councilman Caruso asked Mr. Ward if the Norton Tourism Committee had responded to the questions submitted to them. Mr. Ward advised he had heard nothing from them. He further reminded those present that on National Trails Day, each community is asked to hold an activity which will bring some regional recognition.

Mayor Mays stated he appreciated the confidence shown in him tonight by Council members in re-electing him Mayor.

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Councilman Roop stated he felt the City should diligently pursue getting the U. S. Forest Service to relocate in Norton.

He publicly recognized the work of Assistant City Manager Fred Ramey for the work he has done and continues to do on the City's Channel 51, Twitter and Facebook Accounts, and the Tourism Maps.

He also asked for the backing of Council members in efforts to clean up the City by getting blighted properties eliminated within the City. The City Manager commented that several mobile homes in the old Mullins Trailer Park in Ramey have or are in the process of being removed.

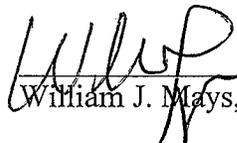
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Councilman Roop stated he would like to see something done to the old apartment building that was torn down and left in the vicinity of the new CVS.

Councilman Caruso brought up two non-functioning tipples located within the City and Mr. Ramey advised that the City is working on this in relation to the River Walk Project.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk