

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 15, 2008 in the Municipal Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

Present: Jack Wallace, Robert Raines, William Mays, and Joseph Fawbush

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

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 of allegiance led by the Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, Dr. Lee Brannon.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 1, 2008 meeting as presented.

21886

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Ms. Rita Jo McReynolds, a member of the Board of Trustees for the High Knob Restoration Taskforce, spoke briefly to Council and asked for a \$5,000 donation from the City toward the rebuilding/restoration of the tower.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized an appropriation of \$5,000 for the rebuilding/restoration of the High Knob Tower. These funds will come from Unappropriated Reserves.

21887

Dr. Lee Brannon, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, spoke briefly to Council and advised that the City of Norton School System has been notified that they, along with the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium, are in receipt of a \$992,000 grant from the Department of Education for the Teaching American History Grant Program. Congressman Boucher will be here on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April to make this announcement. The City of Norton School System will serve as the fiscal agent for this grant.

21888

A public hearing was held on a request to amend the 2007-2008 budget of the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$417,100 for the renovations to Lawson-Fitchko Stadium. At Council's last meeting, the City Manager was advised to schedule this public hearing.

Mayor Raines opened the public hearing.

Dr. Brannon answered several questions from Council members.

There being no further comments, Mayor Raines closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to amend the 2007-2008 budget of the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$417,100 for the renovations to the Lawson-Fitchko Stadium.

21889

Mayor Raines expressed Council's appreciation to the members of the School Board for their efforts.

A public hearing was held on An Ordinance Exempting Certain Real Property and Improvements Thereto From Real Property Taxation by the City of Norton.

The City Manager advised that this request had come at a recent Council meeting from the Freedom of Worship Church located at 308 Coeburn Avenue from Senior Pastor Robbie Fultz.

Mr. Ward further advised Council members that the ordinance to be considered for adoption tonight was placed at each member's desk prior to tonight's meeting.

There were no questions or comments from Council prior to the public hearing.

Mayor Raines opened the public hearing.

At this time, Robbie Fultz spoke briefly to Council and advised them of the activities held at this location. It is primarily used for teenagers and youth services are held every Wednesday evening. It is also used for other church activities.

Also during the public hearing, the City Attorney asked several questions of Mr. Fultz pertaining to this request. Following his questioning of Mr. Fultz, City Attorney Bradshaw thanked Mr. Fultz for his cooperation.

There being no further questions or comments, Mayor Raines closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT - Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt An Ordinance Exempting Certain Real Property and Improvements Thereto from Real Property Taxation by the City of Norton. (Insert)

Council had a request by the Freedom of Worship Church for a refund of the 2007 real estate taxes for the property at 308 Coeburn Avenue. The amount of taxes was \$2,680. They paid this amount plus penalty and interest for a total amount of \$2,997.13.

Vice Mayor Mays advised that he had no problem reimbursing this money to the Church; however, he asked the City Attorney if this was legal for the Council to do since the tax exempt status was approved tonight. Mr. Bradshaw advised he would need to research this.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to table this request for a refund of 2007 real estate taxes for the Freedom of Worship Church until such time as the City Attorney can advise of the legality to do so.

Dr. Lee Brannon, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, and Ron McCall, Chairman of the Norton City School Board, were present at tonight's meeting. Dr. Brannon had a PowerPoint presentation on the School Board's 2008-2009 budget and he gave a synopsis to Council covering same.

He advised that the School Board is anticipating receiving state funds in the amount of \$4,936,749. He further advised that they are seeking no additional local funds from the City, only level funding, and requesting \$32,059 in the Debt Service Account to cover one-half of the NES kitchen payment.

Their budget also represents a 5% pay increase for all employees.

In their CIP Plan, he advised that they definitely needed the new school bus; however the other two items could wait until another year if funding was unavailable.

21890

21891

21892

After his presentation, Mayor Raines thanked Dr. Brannon and the School Board for the job they have done. He further advised that Council would take their budget into consideration at their budget workshop session, which is to be held after tonight's meeting.

At this time, Mr. Ward advised that he would like to recognize Ms. Jessica Pestana, an employee of the University of Virginia's College at Wise and a member of the 2008 Forward Wise County Class.

21893

Mayor Raines welcomed Ms. Pestana to tonight's meeting and apologized for not recognizing her at the beginning of the meeting.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended and expansion of an existing business as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (5) of the Code of Virginia, as amended  
Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

21894

At this time, Councilman Hunnicutt took his seat on Council and joined in the closed meeting.

21895

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go back into open meeting.

Mayor Raines declared Council back in open meeting.

21896

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 William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – NONE, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

21897

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Authority for a four year term which will expire May 15, 2012.

William Mays nominated Jack Wallace to be reappointed to this Authority.

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

21898

Mayor Raines declared Jack Wallace reappointed to the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Authority for a four year term which will expire May 15, 2012.

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised that Mayor Raines was awarded the 2007 Award of Excellence at the annual Chamber of Commerce Gala held Saturday, May 12, 2008.

21899

Mayor Raines expressed his appreciation for this award and for the privilege of working with and for the citizens of Norton and working with others on a regional level.

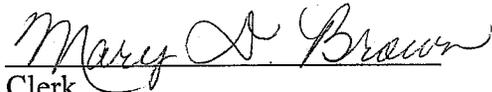
There were no comments from the City Attorney or City Council and the meeting was adjourned to go into a budget work session.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Clerk