

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Reverend John Ellington and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Fire Chief D. C. Mullins and members of the Norton Fire Department.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the September 16, 2014 meeting as presented. 25285

There was no response to the Mayor's call for visitors. 25286

At this time, Mr. Ramey stated he had invited a City employee to tonight's meeting. This employee was Mrs. Dottie Abshire, who will be retiring at the end of this month after 27 years of service to the City. Mrs. Abshire has been an E911 dispatcher since her employment and served as the Dispatch Supervisor for fifteen of those years.

Mrs. Abshire came forward and Mayor Mays presented to her, on behalf of Council, a plaque honoring her years of service and dedication to the city. Mrs. Abshire was given a standing ovation and received applause and thanked for her years of service. 25287

Mrs. Abshire thanked Council and stated she has enjoyed working for the City and that she will miss her job as E911 dispatcher.

At this time, Mayor Mays advised he would abstain from discussion on the Rural Development Community Facilities Loan & Grant Project and turned the meeting over to Vice Mayor Fawbush. 25288

The City Manager advised Council the purpose of the public hearing was to provide the public with an opportunity to offer comments regarding the proposed Rural Development Community Facilities Loan & Grant Project. The proposed project would purchase three new police vehicles with related equipment under this loan/grant program. A public hearing is required before City Council takes any action.

There being no comments or discussion by City Council, Vice Mayor Fawbush opened the public hearing. 25289

There being no public comments, Vice Mayor Fawbush closed the public hearing.

City Council had no comments or discussion and the City Manager advised no further action was needed at this time.

The Vice Mayor turned the meeting back over to Mayor Mays.

Mayor Mays recognized Fire Chief D. C. Mullins who presented Council with a list of working officers of the Department for the fiscal year 2014-2015. He advised there were

no changes on the list from last year. He asked Council's consideration in approving this group of volunteers.

Chief Mullins then introduced each member that was present and advised Council that the Department averages sixteen members per call with an en-route time of 2 minutes.

Mayor Mays commended the Department for their service to the City as did Councilman Caruso.

25290

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Mark Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the list of working officers for the fiscal year 2014-2015 as presented by Fire Chief Mullins. At this time, a round of applause was given to the firefighters.

Mr. Ramey advised the City had recently received notification that the Planning Commission had been approached about rezoning of the Roberts Avenue/Locust Avenue areas which, lie between Kentucky Avenue and Lost Creek Drive S.W. He asked City Building Official Winfred Collins to formally present this recommendation to Council on behalf of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Collins presented Council with a PowerPoint presentation on the rezoning process and a map of the Roberts Avenue/Locust Avenue areas. This request was heard by the Planning Commission and a public hearing was held on the rezoning of the property from Residential A (R-A) to Residential B (R-B). The Commission stated the request was in compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and voted to recommend to City Council that this request be approved.

25291

Councilman Roop cited several reasons for having Residential A (R-A) and his opinion would be not to approve the rezoning request but he wants to hear from the citizens in that area.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of City Council to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the rezoning request.

Presented to Council in their packets were two resolutions and a Code of Conduct which are required to be adopted by Rural Development for the Community Facilities Loan and Grant.

The first resolution is A Loan Resolution Authorizing the Execution of Rural Development Loan Documents Related to a Community Facilities Loan and Grant Project.

At this time, Mayor Mays inquired of the City Attorney if he needed to abstain from discussion on Agenda Items C, D, and E; the City Attorney advised Mayor Mays that he did not need to excuse himself from discussion of these items.

25292

This resolution states the City is undertaking the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$50,000.00 that will be paid back over five years.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, 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 the Execution of Rural Development Loan Documents Related to a Community Facilities Loan and Grant Project. (Insert)

The second resolution is A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of Rural Development Grant Documents Related to a Community Facilities Loan and Grant Project. This resolution authorizes the City Manager, Mayor, or both to execute any additional documents related to the loan and grant.

25293

Upon a motion 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 the Execution of Rural Development Grant Documents Related to a Community Facilities Loan and Grant Project. (Insert)

Also for Council’s consideration was A Code of Conduct Related to a Community Facilities Loan and Grant Project.

The City Manager advised that Rural Development requires any project to adopt a Code of Conduct.

25294

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 Code of Conduct Related to a Community Facilities Loan and Grant Project. (Insert)

Council had been presented with a resolution seeking to designate a Woodbooger Sanctuary in the City of Norton.

Councilman Caruso informed Council it was the wish of the Tourism Committee to move forward with the Woodbooger Sanctuary to increase outdoor recreation in the Flag Rock Recreation Area. At this time, Councilman Caruso read a draft resolution declaring the City of Norton a Sasquatch/Bigfoot/Woodbooger Sanctuary.

25295

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council adopted a resolution declaring the City of Norton a Sasquatch/Bigfoot/Woodbooger Sanctuary. (Insert)

Council had been supplied, in their packets, an Application for a water and sewer connection from Norman D. Jennings at 5200 Spotswood Road which is outside the City limits.

The City Manager informed Council the City’s T&D Supervisor had reviewed the application and the water and sewer services are available.

25296

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council approved the request for an outside water and sewer connection of Norman D. Jennings at 5200 Spotswood Road.

Included in Council’s packet were one transfer and two checks for approval. These are as follows: A transfer to the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$270,000 dated September 29, 2014; a check to Thomas Construction Company, Inc., in the amount of \$119,266.19; and a check to Thomas Construction Company, Inc., in the amount of 236,669.72.

25297

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the transfer and two checks as stipulated above.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, 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.

25298

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed Meeting.

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

25299

Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

The acting clerk polled each member of Council as to the Certification of Closed Meeting with each answering yes. The acting clerk then read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, 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)

25300

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ramey advised that:

On Wednesday, October 15th, the City officially closed on the refinancing of the \$1,208,000 General Obligation Bond at a fixed rate of 2.72%.

City Staff was recently notified that we were being awarded the Predevelopment Planning Grant from Rural Development to assist the City in completing a Preliminary Engineering Report for the Hawthorne Drive Utility Relocation Study. It was the consensus of Council to accept the award and move forward with the project.

The Norton Water Treatment Plant logged record rainfall during the month of October.

Due to the recent heavy rainfall, portions of the upper bench on the SRTS Project have to be cut back due to slides and a portion of the project has been re-engineered.

Norton City Schools recently recognized the City's Emergency Services for their efforts after the bomb threat at NEMS.

25301

City Council has been provided the latest Monthly Retail Sales Tax Report.

He provided Council with a document from the VML outlining the governor's proposed budget cut plan. He is waiting on the Impact of Aid to the Commonwealth which is being re-implemented.

The 2015 Coalfield Legislative Reception has been scheduled for Thursday, January, 22 in Richmond and asked that Council members contact him if they plan to attend in order for him to make reservations.

He presented Council with a copy of the Woodbooger Search Flyer that will be held this Friday and Saturday at Flag Rock Recreation Area.

He advised the City will be assisting with the following upcoming events: Sykes' Color Me Red 5K on October 26th, the Catholic Church's St. Jude's Fundraising 5K Run/Walk event on November 1st, and Family Preservation Services Santa Fun Run/Walk 5K on December 6th.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

25302

In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso highlighted sales tax revenue is up and he hopes the trend continues through the Christmas season. Also, he wanted to thank those involved in planning the Woodbooger event this weekend and the Tourism Committee for their efforts.

Vice Mayor Fawbush advised the Woodbooger Search event this weekend is just one small piece of the tourism puzzle that is needed to bring tourists to our area. He also suggested that the Heart of Appalachia or another agency should coordinate all events in the area so that events do no overlap which would make us more productive in scheduling of events.

Councilman Roop mentioned the Appalachian Voice October/November 2014 edition had a picture of Shayne Fields, an article on the new bike trail along with several comments from Councilman Caruso which are good public relations for tourism in the City of Norton as well as the region. Councilman Roop commented the Woodbooger event is very creative and we have to get our own young people excited and involved this is a stepping stone to bringing outsiders to the area. He thanked Coalfield Progress Reporter Katie Dunn and everyone involved the Hellbender 10K for their efforts in the event and the editorial in the Coalfield which reflected positively on the City. He also hopes that Teresa Holt continues to improve and recover quickly from a recent accident. The City recently received a recycling grant and he would like for the City Manager to give an update in the future on the recycling program in the City. He also stated he would like for the City to work with the school on increasing their recycling efforts. The City had received a letter from Heart of Appalachia regarding our kiosk located at Hardees asking us to evaluate the location to ensure we are receiving maximum benefit and asked that this be done. He also wanted to hear about the September meeting between Mr. Ramey and other town managers. He hoped this meeting was held and continues as a regional approach for tourism and to improve the economy in Southwest Virginia.

25303

Mayor Mays noted that in the past City Hall was closed for voting. Even though elections are not in the Municipal Building any longer he would like to know Council's opinion on the November 4th meeting.

25304

Following a brief discussion, the consensus of City Council was to cancel the meeting for Tuesday, November 4, 2014.

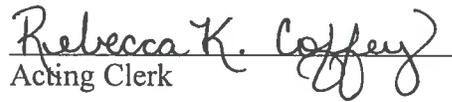
There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Acting Clerk