

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Robert Fultz, Jr., William Mays, Joseph Fawbush and Dee Belcher

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., 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 Councilman Caruso.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the October 20, 2015 meeting as presented.

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During the Mayor's call for visitors, Mr. Ben Hooper, 419 Chestnut Street, N.W., came forward to express his disapproval of amending the City Code to allow utility vehicles on certain City streets. Mr. Hooper advised Council of his concerns and said he would be agreeable to utility vehicles used for work as long as the vehicles are tagged "Work Use Only" and passed yearly utility vehicle inspections.

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Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Hooper for his comments.

A public hearing was held on An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia, amending Article IV Section 13-77 (utility vehicles) of the Norton City Code.

During his summarization via a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Ramey reviewed the background of the ordinance and gave an overview of the streets where utility vehicles would not be allowed.

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

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

Mr. Larry Carter, Kentucky Avenue resident, asked for clarification for restricting 3rd, 14th and 15th Streets for utility vehicles.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council to remove Trent Street from the list of prohibited streets for utility vehicles.

Mr. Carter asked for another clarification of Kentucky Avenue since it is a 35 mph street. He wanted to know if he could legally drive his utility vehicle in the parking lanes located on both sides of the street of Kentucky Avenue.

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The City Attorney advised Mr. Carter that he would be illegally moving his utility vehicle on Kentucky Avenue according to the qualifying ordinance and the State Code's definition of a street.

There being no further public comment, Mayor Mays closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia Amending Article IV Section 13-77 (utility vehicles) of the

Norton City Code with the removal of Trent Street from the list of prohibited streets. This ordinance will go into effect after 30 days. (Insert)

An update on the activities of the Clinch River Valley Initiative (CRVI) was presented to Council by Robyn Lee and Wally Smith of the University of Virginia's College at Wise.

Ms. Lee advised Council that CRVI is pioneering an effort to build local economies focusing on the Clinch River. CRVI's partners are working to connect downtown revitalization, outdoor recreation, water quality, entrepreneurship, and environmental education along the Clinch River. Their goal is that the Clinch River will be a global destination by 2020. CRVI has been active since 2010 and has made great progress.

Mr. Smith first thanked City Council for allowing them to come and update Council on CRVI's activities. He advised Council since CRVI's inception they have been working on developing the Clinch River State Park. CRVI has been lobbying the General Assembly for funding and received seed money in 2015. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is currently looking for park properties and the plan now is to have several anchoring properties linked together along the Clinch River by connecting access points to the river. In 2016 the DCR is going to request \$2.5 million from the General Assembly for land acquisition and \$13.5 million for phase I development of a state park. CRVI hopes that other communities that are not along the Clinch River, but are in the watershed, can participate and receive economic development by marketing outdoor recreation.

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Mayor Mays recommended CRVI work on the tributaries into the Clinch River such as the Guest River.

Mr. Smith advised Upper Tennessee River Round Table (UTRR) has been focusing on the Guest River and CRVI has worked on the trail guide development at the Guest River Gorge and they would like to expand that to the City of Norton.

Mayor Mays thanked them for the update and CRVI's work.

In their packets Council was given a copy of A Resolution Supporting the Southwest Virginia Training Center.

Mr. Ramey advised Council he had received a request from Teresa Barringer to have someone speak to Council regarding the Southwest Virginia Training Center (SWVTC) located in Hillsville. Present at tonight's meeting are Ms. Charlotte Barkley and Mr. Doug Isaac to discuss the training center.

Prior to Ms. Barkley's presentation, she shared a video with Council that depicted some of the training centers daily responsibilities for residents living at the center. Ms. Barkley then spoke to Council about the SWVTC and fielded questions from Council.

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Mayor Mays advised Ms. Barkley that he would like to learn more about their organization and he would like to table the resolution until Council's next meeting on December 1, 2015.

Councilman Caruso explained as a governing body, Council needs more information to make a decision but it seems to be a valuable center to the residents and their families and he intends to support the resolution if no information changes within the next two weeks.

Mr. Ramey gave Council an update on the Request to Participate in the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Fish Management and Stocking Program. He

25691

advised Councilman Caruso had been contacted by a representative of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) and was informed the City had been approved effective January 1, 2016. Mr. Ramey stated the City will not receive any documentation from the (DGIF) that the reservoir has been placed in the program but he has been assured that the City will be included if the current ordinance is updated.

Mayor Mays asked if Council needs to repeal a section of the ordinance.

The City Attorney advised he had spoken with the City Manager and had prepared a draft amendment to the ordinance that removes all City licenses and permitting and would require only a state license.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the City's Proposed Amendment to Fishing in City Reservoirs.

In their packets, Council had a request from the Commissioner of the Revenue for a 2012-2015 real estate tax refund that was a result of calculation errors in square footage assessed to Ronald and Kim Gilliam in the amount of \$1,019.96.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized a refund for calculation errors assessed for 2012-2015 real estate taxes to Ronald and Kim Gilliam in the amount of \$1,019.96. 25692

Council had been presented in their packets A Resolution Recognizing November as Adoption Awareness Month.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Recognizing November as Adoption Awareness Month. (Insert) 25693

In their packets, Council had one transfer to be approved. The transfer was to Norton City Schools in the amount of \$200,000 to cover payroll expenditures.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve the one transfer as stated above. 25694

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, 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. 25695

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Councilman Fultz left the Council meeting at this time. 25696

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go back into open meeting. 25697
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. 25698

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

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

The latest Retail Sales Tax Report had been placed at each member's desk.

As part of the Phase III Water Project 7th and 8th Streets were recently milled and paved. Also 1,500 lf of galvanized waterline will be replaced on Chestnut Street up to Monroe Street. In addition, the waterline that serves Hilltop Trailer Park will be relocated out of the river and from under the railroad.

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Council has been provided the latest Statement of Economic Interest which is due back by December 15, 2015.

The Thanksgiving Holiday Schedule had been placed at each member's desk and includes the garbage schedule.

The City will be promoting the Shop Small and Shop Local campaigns on all of the City's social media.

The Turkey Trot 5K will be held on Thanksgiving Day.

The Santa Fun Run 5K will be held on Saturday, December 5th.

The City Christmas Parade is scheduled for Sunday, December 6th.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

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In comments from Council:

Councilman Caruso asked if there was a timeline on the fireworks.

Mr. Ramey advised he will be placing the 2016 fireworks on Council's agenda and a decision needs to be made as quickly as possible due to the vendors being booked in January.

Councilman Caruso asked if there was a timeline on the farmers' market decision. He understands NIDA is looking for guidance from Council and he would like for the item to be placed on Council's next agenda.

He asked who had supplied information on the horse park provided to Council.

Mr. Ramey advised that he would let Councilwoman Belcher explain.

Councilwoman Belcher advised that the sheet was information Beth Walker had put together regarding ideas and possibilities for Council to consider.

25701

Councilman Caruso asked for an update on the ATV Ordinance and VDOT's information.

Mr. Ramey passed Mr. Caruso an email he had received today.

Councilman Caruso asked the City Manager to pass along the information from VDOT when he receives it.

He stated as spring approaches the City has an opportunity to enhance economic development by moving forward with the ATV ordinance.

He would like to see a strategic plan review. The City currently has no road map to the future. He asked Mayor Mays to set a date so Council could start working on a strategic planning document and prepare a vision statement.

Councilwoman Belcher stated things are moving along quickly now that the holidays are approaching. Hopefully, the Christmas shopping will benefit the City. She advised this had been a learning year for her and next week will be a time to reflect on what she is grateful for.

She asked the City Attorney if there was anything in the State Code to prohibit teachers from being trained in defense of the schools. 25702

The City Attorney advised he would rather direct that question to someone who is more familiar with representing school boards and school affairs. He could obtain the answer but he would not be the most economical means of acquiring that answer.

Councilman Fawbush stated he had attended the Farmers Insurance ribbon cutting ceremony and welcomed the new business downtown.

Last Tuesday was the local legislature day at Norton Elementary and Middle School. This was a project of the 7th Grade Civics Class. He represented City Council and Sherry Adams represented the School Board. Dr. Perrigan was also in attendance. The majority of the questions were regarding school safety, school resource officer and terrorist events.

He wanted to commend Councilman Caruso for his excellent presentation at the Veteran's event at John I. Burton High School. A lot of veterans were in attendance. The band performed and the clock tower was rededicated. 25703

He congratulated Councilman Fultz on his reelection.

He wanted to thank the City Police, Fire and Rescue Departments for their services in the funeral of Mr. Victor Jones. Mr. Jones was a member of the Norton Fire Department and the Norton Lions Club. He was an active church member and a local businessman. It was moving tribute for Fire Department members to serve as pallbearers and to transport Mr. Jones to the cemetery.

Mayor Mays recognized Councilman Caruso for his address at the Veterans Program held at John I. Burton High School and stated he heard Councilman Caruso did an excellent job.

He attended the Citizens Academy graduation at the High Rise with Police Chief Lane and thanked Chief Lane for holding the academies. 25704

He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council