

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 20, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

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

At this time, Mayor Raines recognized several members of the Forward Wise County Class. Those in attendance were: Lee Houston, Sharon Taylor, Jeff Roark, and Travis Dickenson. He also welcomed members of the City of Norton School Board.

Mayor Raines spoke briefly, advising that the City had been fortunate in having leaders involved in community, regional and state activities. On Monday, April 19, 2004, the City lost a valuable community leader in the passing of Charles Daniels. Mr. Daniels was a man of vision, energy, and enthusiasm and Mayor Raines extended the City's thoughts and sympathies to his wife and family members. A minute of silent prayer was held.

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The invocation was given by the City Manager and was followed by the pledge of allegiance, which was also led by the City Manager.

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Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 6, 2004 meeting as presented.

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Mayor Raines advised that tonight's agenda would be amended to include Item 6-D-1 Consideration of a Sewer Tap Outside the Corporation Limits. This tap is for a business that is being dislocated due to the Norton Commons Shopping Center.

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

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Dr. John Sessoms, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, presented Council with a brief synopsis of their 2004-2005 budget. Also present were four of the five members of the School Board.

Dr. Sessoms advised that this budget was developed with no final revenue figures from the state and is based on 710 students. A 2.5% increase is included for all personnel and there are no new positions, nor any additional services included. Their budget totals \$5,840,024 and includes additional revenue from the City in the amount of \$68,976, plus a \$41,723 debt reduction for a total amount of \$109,723. He further advised that any additional state revenues received by the School System will be deducted from the new funds requested from the City.

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Dr. Sessoms advised that he was willing to answer any questions from Council.

Mayor Raines advised that the School Board Budget would be considered during tonight's work session on the City's budget, which will be held following tonight's regular meeting. Mayor Raines also gave a timeline on the budget procedure.

Council had on tonight's agenda a request from Commonwealth-Norton Partners to close Hawthorne Drive to through traffic as soon as possible.

In his letter, Mr. Scoggin advised that earth moving will be in full force by next week and that he will work with the City on proper signage and on making a proper turn around area. Hopefully, the project will be completed in October.

Mr. Steve Collins and Roger Whitaker, business owners on Hawthorne Drive, spoke to Council requesting a temporary road to be installed during this timeframe.

Following a discussion and upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized the closing of Hawthorne Drive and also instructed the City Manager to work with the developer on an alternate way in to this area per the request of business owners in this area.

Mayor Raines advised the City Manager to keep Mr. Collins and Mr. Whitaker notified of his findings on the request of an alternate road.

Council had a request to advertise a public hearing in connection with the General Reassessment of Real Property.

Mr. Ward advised that the City had just completed a general reassessment and the total assessed value of real property exceeded last year's total assessed value of real property by 3.263%. The lowered rate necessary to offset the increased assessment that would levy the same amount of real estate tax as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value of real estate with the exclusions would be \$.68 per \$100 of assessed value. This rate is the "lowered tax rate".

The City proposes to adopt a tax rate of \$.70 per \$100 of assessed value. The difference between the lowered tax rate and the proposed rate would be \$.02 per \$100, or 2.94%. This difference is the "effective tax rate increase".

In order to raise the rate to \$.70 per \$100 of assessed value, a public hearing must be held. This public hearing will be held on May 4, 2004.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized the City Manager to advertise a public hearing in connection with the general reassessment of real property.

In their packets, Council had been presented with A Resolution Supporting Emergystat Ambulance Service Doing Business in the City of Norton.

Vice Mayor Mays advised at this time that he will be abstaining from any discussion or vote on this item.

Mr. Ward advised that Emergystat is buying out First Choice Ambulance Service, which is located in the City, and wishes Council to adopt this resolution in support of their seeking licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The City Administration recommends adoption of this resolution.

Among those present from Emergystat was Mr. Clanton Dubois. He spoke briefly to Council regarding his company, which has its headquarters in Vernon, Alabama.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Wallace, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSTAIN Mays, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Supporting Emergystat Ambulance Service Doing Business in the City of Norton. (Insert)

Council had a request for one sewer tap for Carty Funeral Home, which is being displaced due to the Norton Commons Shopping Center. This tap is to be in the Wise Shopping Center.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve one sewer tap for Carty Funeral Home in the Wise Shopping Center.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous 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. 20784

Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go back into open meeting. 20785

Mayor Raines declared Council back in open meeting.

The Clerk then 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 Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert) 20786

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the Community Services Board for a two year term to expire on May 1, 2006.

William Mays nominated Barbara Caruso to be reappointed to this board. 20787

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

Mayor Raines declared Barbara Caruso reappointed to the Community Services Board for a two year term to expire on May 1, 2006.

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for four year terms to expire on May 10, 2008.

Jack Wallace nominated Byron Cantrell and William Sturgill to be reappointed to this Authority. 20788

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

Mayor Raines declared Byron Cantrell and William Sturgill reappointed to the Norton Industrial Development Authority for four year terms, which will expire May 10, 2008.

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Authority for a four year term. to expire on May 15, 2008.

Joseph Fawbush nominated Jack Wallace to be reappointed to this Authority. 20789


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

Mayor Raines declared Jack Wallace to be reappointed to the C-N-W Regional Wastewater Authority for a four year term to expire on May 15, 2008.

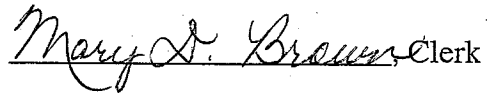
There were no comments from the City Manager.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned to a work session on the City of Norton 2004-2005 budget.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:

 Clerk