

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 4, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Fawbush

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, which was led by City Sheriff Carlos Noaks.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 20, 2004 meeting as presented.

20780

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

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A public hearing was held on the consideration of a proposed real estate tax increase due to an increase in the general reassessment of real property.

This public hearing has been duly advertised and Mr. Ward advised that this was discussed with Council at their last meeting. A general reassessment has been completed 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 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. The difference between the lowered tax rate of \$ .68 and the proposed rate would be \$ .02 per \$100 of assessed value or 2.94%.

20782

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

Mayor Raines opened the public hearing.

There being no public input, 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 approve the proposed real estate tax increase of \$ .70 per \$100 of assessed value.

Dr. Terrance Suarez, President of Mountain Empire Community College, was present and gave Council a brief update of activities and events at the college and discussed the seven items that the Virginia Community College System has as major goals to be achieved by the year of 2009.

20783

Mayor Raines thanked Dr. Suarez for this update.

Dr. Suarez thanked Council for their continued support.

Present tonight to discuss the proposed 2004-2005 budget of the Norton City Schools was Dr. John Sessoms, Superintendent. This budget was presented to Council at their last meeting.

Dr. Sessoms advised that the General Assembly has guaranteed some new revenue to school systems; however, they do not know the amount of this new revenue.

Mayor Raines advised that the City Manager recommends level funding of last year's local funds to the school system in the amount of \$1,576,522. This also takes into consideration the reduction of debt service.

20784

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the City Administration to advertise a public hearing to level fund the 2004-2005 budget of the Norton City Schools with local funding in the amount of \$1,576,522.

Council had a request in their packets to amend the 2003-2004 budget of the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$16,494.

Dr. Sessoms advised this was for an e-rate refund and that said funds would go back into the technology program.

20785

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to amend the Norton City Schools 2003-2004 budget in the amount of \$16,494.

Council had a copy of a check in the amount of \$500,000 made payable to the Norton Industrial Development Authority.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll all vote, Council moved to approve a check in the amount of \$500,000 made payable to the Norton Industrial Development Authority.

20786

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Jack Wallace, 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.

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Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

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

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

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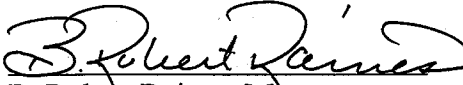
In comments from the City Manger, Mr. Ward advised that bids had been opened on the Laurel Trail Housing Project on Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, and only two bids were received. He advised that this was disappointing and the low bid was substantially over the estimate the City had received. Therefore, there is a shortfall of funds for this project. Mr. Pat Murphy of Thompson and Litton, the engineer for this project, is looking over

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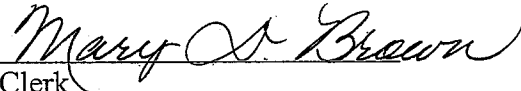
these bids and the Administration hopes to make a recommendation to City Council on this project at the next meeting.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Clerk