

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, June 20, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

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 Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Fultz and Belcher, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the June 6, 2017, meeting as presented.

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There was no one present for the Audience for Visitors.

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A public hearing was held to consider an amendment to the 2016-2017 General Operating Fund Budget totaling \$630,453, of which \$349,942 is unappropriated reserves and \$280,511 is additional revenues related to grants and other funding sources for various projects and events.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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There being no public input, Mayor Mays closed the public hearing.

There were no comments or questions from Council following the public hearing and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to adopt the FY 2017 Budget Amendments to the General Operating Fund in the amount of \$630,453.

Mark Leonard, Chairman of the Norton Rescue Squad Board of Directors, was present to update Council on the Norton Rescue Squad. Via a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Leonard spoke briefly about the history and current mission of the organization, as well as, the finances and membership of the squad.

Mr. Leonard stated in 2016, Norton Rescue Squad responded to 1,110 calls, which represents an increase of 13 percent over the previous year. He said the rescue squad operates on a calendar year and the organization currently has a deficit of \$44,826. Mr. Leonard explained the squad is currently conducting Bingo on Sunday and Wednesday evenings as a fundraiser, and members have received training on transport billing, both of which will increase revenue for the organization. He said the board had identified potential new revenue for billing non-emergency transports, and he is thankful to Council for their financial support of the rescue squad during low cash flow periods. Mr. Leonard noted that there is an increase in professionalism in the organization and that membership had doubled since 2016. The number of paramedics on the squad has also increased and members are becoming certified to answer calls through hours of classroom and clinical training required by the state of Virginia. Mr. Leonard advised that Norton

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Rescue Squad currently has five vehicles in its fleet and that one of the ambulances will need to be replaced in the near future. The cost to replace an ambulance is approximately \$200,000, and he is confident the squad can obtain a grant to cover 80 percent of the cost. However, prior to replacing the ambulance, the board wants to pay off a small debt and establish a funded depreciation account in which to save 20 percent of the purchase price of the ambulance that will be required by the grant. A depreciation account will also assist the squad in planning for future necessary capital purchases.

On behalf of Council, Mayor Mays thanked Mr. Leonard for his presentation.

Mayor Mays and Councilman Caruso stated they would abstain from discussion and voting on the proposed updated lease agreement between the City of Norton and the Norton Rescue Squad due to a conflict of interest. Vice Mayor Fawbush took over the meeting.

The City Manager gave a brief history on the current lease between the City of Norton and Norton Rescue Squad and stated it was time for the original lease to be revised to reflect the current status of the organization and the relationship and responsibilities between the two entities. He said the city attorney had reviewed the proposed lease and Norton Rescue Squad will not pay rent to the city for the use of the building located on Main Avenue and the squad will be responsible for utilities and to maintain insurance on the property.

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The City Attorney said the proposed lease of commercial property is a standard document with basic conditions and requirements with the exception of no rent payments. He said the revised lease specifies Norton Rescue Squad will be responsible for building repairs, insurance, and maintenance for the duration of the lease.

After a brief discussion, the City Attorney advised the Vice Mayor would need Council's authorization to sign the lease on behalf of the city.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Fultz, Belcher, Fawbush, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Mays and Caruso, Council moved to approve the Real Estate Lease between the City of Norton and Norton Rescue Squad, Inc., and authorized the Vice Mayor to sign the lease on behalf of the city.

Council was presented An Ordinance Adopting the 2017-2018 Budget for the City of Norton, Virginia, Appropriating Funds for All Contemplated Expenses of the City for the Fiscal Year and Placing Levies upon all Real Estate, Personal Property, Bank Stock, Licenses, Fees, User Charges, and All Other Levies as Previously Imposed or Modified Herein. The General Fund totals \$9,617,576; the Enterprise Fund, \$3,135,250; and Social Services Fund, \$1,386,620.

Mr. Ramey said a public hearing was held June 6, 2017, and no changes or modifications have been made to the budget. He said the General Operating Fund includes no revenue enhancements and the Enterprise Fund includes a 25-cent increase to the base water rate. The FY 2017-2018 Budget reflects a decrease of \$38,287, compared to last year's budget, and no surplus monies are needed to balance the budget.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt An Ordinance Adopting the

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Budget for the City of Norton, Virginia, for Fiscal Year July 1, 2017, thru June 30, 2018, Appropriating Funds for All Contemplated Expenses of the City of the Fiscal Year and Placing Levies Upon all Real Estate, Personal Property and Bank Stock, Licenses, Fees, User Charges, and all Other Levies as Previously Imposed or Modified Herein. (Insert)

Mr. Ramey advised that city administration has received a proposed Southwest Virginia Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEO) Consortium Agreement. He said the purpose of the proposed agreement was to formalize the creation of the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and the Consortium Agreement.

Councilwoman Belcher, who is the city's representative on the CLEO Board, said in the past the consortium agreement was signed by each locality's representative. However, Director Aleta Spicer has asked each representative to present the Consortium Agreement to their governing board or council for approval.

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After a brief discussion, and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Area and the Southwest Virginia Chief Elected Officials Consortium and, authorized Councilwoman Belcher, the city's CLEO representative, to sign the agreement on behalf of the city.

Council had been presented with A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton Adopting a Five Year Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Ramey advised that the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is part of the budget process and that only one capital project was being funded in the current 2017-2018 budget. He said the current budget includes an appropriation of \$250,000 for the partial lease payment of a new garbage truck and for paving. The city manager noted that paving is not considered a capital improvement project, but it is included in the CIP Program because it is a large expenditure. Mr. Ramey said the remaining four years of the Five Year CIP Program are for planning purposes only, and, any projects listed beyond the 2017-2018 budget year, represent city administration's recommendations to address the remaining projects listed in the CIP Program. He noted the remaining projects could change depending upon other projects that could arise in the future or projects that might move up in importance for the city.

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Councilman Caruso said he wanted to reiterate the city manager's comments that funds have not been appropriated for projects listed in the last four years of the CIP Program. At this point in time, the city does not have the funds to address these projects and the only year being funded is 2017-2018.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton Adopting a Five Year Capital Improvement Program. (Insert)

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, 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, and discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publically held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely

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affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

The city attorney left at this time.

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

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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.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Lonesome Pine Regional Library Board for a four-year term to expire on June 30, 2021.

Councilman Caruso nominated Lann Malesky to be reappointed to the Lonesome Pine Regional Library Board for a four-year term to expire on June 30, 2021.

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Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Mays declared Lann Malesky reappointed to the Lonesome Pine Regional Library Board for a four-year term to expire on June 30, 2021.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Community Corrections Resources Board for a two-year term to expire on June 30, 2018.

Councilwoman Belcher nominated James Lane to be reappointed to the Community Corrections Resources Board for a two-year term to expire on June 30, 2018.

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

Mayor Mays declared James Lane reappointed to the Community Corrections Resources Board for a two-year term to expire on June 30, 2018.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Mountain Empire Regional Business Incubator, Inc., Board for a four-year term to expire on June 30, 2021.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Tyler Giles to be reappointed to the Mountain Empire Regional Business Incubator, Inc., Board for a four-year term to expire on June 30, 2021.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Mays declared Tyler Giles reappointed to the Mountain Empire Regional Business Incubator, Inc., Board for a four-year term to expire on June 30, 2021.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority Board for a three-year term to expire on June 30, 2020.

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Councilwoman Belcher nominated Robert Fultz, Jr., to be an interim appointee to the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority Board for a three-year term to expire on June 30, 2020.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Fultz, Council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Mays declared Robert Fultz, Jr., to be an interim appointee to the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority for a three-year term to expire on June 30, 2020.

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

The City would like to thank all the volunteers for another successful Best Friend Festival.

City Administration is continuing to work with the coordinator of the Cloudsplitter 100 race. The coordinator has advised that she will have a course to submit to the U. S. Forest Service for their review by the end of the month.

Parks & Recreation has installed 16 inch hanging baskets on every other decorative light along the Safe Route to School coming into downtown and in front of City Hall. The brackets on the decorative light poles will hold up to 50 pounds and the hanging baskets are self-watering, holding up to a gallon of water. If the current project is successful, city administration hopes to install additional flower baskets throughout downtown.

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

Fifteen kids have signed up for the Outdoor Adventure Camp scheduled for June 26-29.

The City will be celebrating Independence Day on Saturday, July 1.

Prior to Councilmember's comments, Council rescheduled and combined the July Council meetings to 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 25, 2017.

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Mayor Mays requested Mr. Ramey notify the press.

In comments from Council:

Councilwoman Belcher had no comments.

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Councilman Fultz said he appreciates all the effort put forth to have the Best Friend Festival.

He believes the city's decline in sales tax revenue is due in part to online shopping. The city's sales tax drop equates to approximately \$7.5 million in sales, and he feels the federal government will eventually determine how to tax online sales and distribute the revenue to states and localities.

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Councilman Caruso stated his downtown business is experiencing a third less sales as compared to this time last year and he can attribute part of this decline to online sales.

Councilman Caruso asked Mr. Ramey to ascertain the cost of the Best Friend Festival (BFF) and prepare a report for council. Also, vendors who desire to set up at the BFF need to be evaluated so that they are not in direct competition with downtown business owners.

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The concrete trash can in front of Wellmont Urgent Care on Park Avenue needs to be moved out of the center of the sidewalk.

Two additional campers signed up for the Outdoor Camp today so that event will proceed as planned on June 26.

Councilman Fawbush stated that the online retailer Amazon is expanding by placing stores in communities.

He commended everyone who worked on the Best Friend Festival for ensuring the success of another event.

Councilman Fawbush said a citizen advised him that vehicles in the right lane of the two one-way lanes on Pine Street, N.W., are turning left onto 11th Street instead of turning right onto 11th Street as indicated by the street markings.

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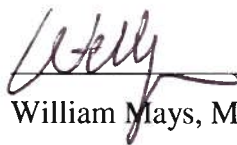
Mr. Ramey advised a resident from Pine Street had contacted city administration about the traffic issue on Pine Street and that city staff is currently looking into the matter.

Mayor Mays had no comments.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council