

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, March 4, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

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

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

The invocation was given by Rev. Shawn Easterling and was followed by the pledge of allegiance, which was led by Norton Police Chief Sam Mongle.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the February 18, 2004 meeting as presented.

20426

Mayor Raines welcomed all those present at tonight's meeting and proceeded to ask the City Manager to give an update on the recent flooding of February 15th and February 22nd.

20427

Mr. Ward advised that the City is continuing to assess the damages from these two events. He advised that the majority of the damage occurred on the 15th, but the City again had some damage in and around the City on the 22nd. FEMA officials were in the City recently and Emergency Services Director Bill Stokes gave them a tour of the City and the damages that were incurred. The City Administration feels that the damage to public property in the City is approximately \$100,000. There has been no type of federal declaration made as of this time.

The City Manager talked with Congressman Boucher's office and with representatives from the Army Corp of Engineers about some work being done on our stream channels; however, there appears to be no federal funding available for this kind of work. City crews are continuing to make repairs to the City's damaged properties. There are still many ditches and roads that need attention and he asked that citizens be patient in this regard.

20428

He further advised that the City's engineer, Bobby Lane, will be present at our next meeting to further discuss options the City may have to consider in order to address some of these storm drainage issues. He then showed Council a map showing rainfall amounts as reported by WCYB Television, which shows Norton receiving 10.98" of rainfall in February. This was the highest amount in the various localities on which they report.

Council had a request to authorize the application for a Local Government Challenge Grant. This is the \$5,000 matching grant that is done annually for the Pro-Art Association.

Present and representing the Pro-Art Association were Mr. Robert Isaac, Mrs. Joyce Winston, and Mrs. Judy Paranthaman. Mr. Isaac was the spokesman for the group. In addition to the annual \$5,000 matching funds, the Association is asking for a one time allowance of \$2,000 to help cover the expenses of the 2003 Creative Arts Summer Camp.

20429

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to apply for a Local Government Challenge Grant in the amount of \$5,000.

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council authorized \$2,000 to the help defray the expenses of the 2003 Creative Arts Summer Camp with said funds coming from Contingency.

Council had been submitted a request from Michele Knox, Parks and Recreation Director, asking that the camping fees for Flag Rock be increased to \$12.00 a night from \$8.00 a night at the upper camp ground, to \$10.00 a night from \$8.00 a night at the lower camp ground, and to \$30.00 a night at the group camping ground. Ms. Knox had submitted fees that are currently being charged by other campgrounds in the area and also advised of the many improvements that have been made in the Flag Rock Recreational Area in the past ten years, including electrical hook-ups at the upper campground.

Ms. Knox was present to answer any questions of Council.

20430

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 adopt the increased fees for the Flag Rock Campgrounds as specified above and as submitted by the City Administration.

Council had been presented with Proposed Amendment #2 to the Norton-Big Stone Gap Water Interconnect Agreement. Mr. Ward advised that this amendment had been prepared by our City Attorney and covers long-term debt. He further advised that it was being submitted to Council for their review.

Both the City Manager and City Attorney gave background information regarding this amendment.

20431

After a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council for the City Administration to work with the City Attorney and the Big Stone Gap Administration on this second amendment and to bring this issue back to Council.

Council had been presented with a draft agreement with the Highlands Juvenile Detention Commission for their review. Also present regarding this item was Sheriff Carlos Noaks, who is responsible for transportation of juveniles. The closest facility to house juveniles is the Highlands Juvenile Detention Center in Bristol, which the City has used along with others in the state. If this facility is filled, then juveniles have to be taken to whatever facility has an empty bed. These conditions have prompted the 29th and 30th Districts, which are the first two planning districts, to look at the possibility of constructing their own facility. A task force was formed, and funds were appropriated and reimbursed through the Jail Authority, to look at the possibility of a stand-alone juvenile facility. This has been done. A Needs Assessment was prepared and has not been approved by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

20432

Now, the Highlands Juvenile Detention Commission has approached the county administrators and the city manager of Norton asking if they would have an interest in entering into an agreement with them to buy into that center and become future owners of that facility along with the current owners, Smyth County, Washington County, and the

City of Bristol. Mr. Ward advised that Lee County, Scott County, and Wise County are very interested in this idea.

Following a discussion, it was the consensus of Council that the City Manager proceed on this project and to keep them informed.

Council had been presented with a Designation of Applicants Agent Resolution for consideration.

Mr. Ward advised that the City is in line to receive \$25,738.76 from the U. S. Department of Justice Equipment Grant Program, which is to be used for the purchase of response equipment that is needed. This resolution designates Mr. William Stokes as our agent on this grant.

20433

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Hunnicutt, Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Designation of Applicants Agent Resolution. (Insert)

Council had a copy of a check in the amount of \$165,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools for approval.

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a check in the amount of \$165,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools.

20434

In comments from the City Manager, Mr. Ward advised Council of an upcoming meeting that coincides with our March 18th Council Meeting. This 6:00 p.m. meeting is for the Advisory Committee of the National Recreation Area of High Knob and is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Hotel Norton. Councilman Hunnicutt is Council's representative on this Committee.

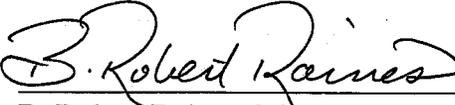
20435

In comments from the City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw thanked Council and the City staff for the condolences he has received during his recent loss of his father. He also expressed appreciation for working with such fine people.

20436

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:


Mary D. Brown, Clerk