

The regular meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 3, 2001 at the 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 Father Joe Facura and was followed by the pledge of allegiance which was led by the Superintendent of Norton City Schools, Dr. John Sessoms.

At this time, Mayor Raines welcomed Mr. Rick Burchfield of Mullican Flooring and Mr. Jeff Shupe of the City of Norton, members of the Forward Wise County Class, who were present at tonight's meeting.

19853

Upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2001 meeting as corrected. In comments from the City Manager, the date of the Chamber Gala was listed as April 17th and should have been April 7th.

19854

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

19855

A public hearing was held to solicit public input on a proposed Community Development Block Grant Application to be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development on the Norton-Big Stone Gap Water Project.

The Manager advised that a sign-up sheet is being circulated through the audience so we will know who attended this public hearing. This listing is one of the City's requirements for this grant application.

The City Manager advised that this is the second of two required public hearings. The first was held a couple of meetings ago and a discussion was held on past use of block grant funds and , the Block Grant Program. Mr. Ward did not specifically target any particular project over another, although he did advise that the City Administration was leaning toward recommending an application for the Norton-Big Stone Gap Water Project. Tonight, he advised that this is the project they would like to submit with Council's approval.

19856

The purpose of the hearing tonight is to talk about the project and solicit public input for those who would like to speak for or against the project or make comments on this project.

Lenowisco Planning District is working with the City to put together the project application. Present tonight was Mr. Skip Skinner of Lenowisco who briefly went over the scope of the project with Council. He advised that this was not the strongest of block grant projects; however, it would be a strategic link for providing interconnections for all the major water systems throughout southwest Virginia throughout the seven county coalfield region. This project is basically a 1.9 million dollar block grant project for which both Big Stone Gap and Norton are applying jointly. It is a strategic link in a very

large project not only for both Big Stone Gap and Norton, but for the entire Southwest Virginia Coalfield Area.

Mr. Ward advised briefly went over the time frame for this project and advised that residents of Hoot Owl Hollow will be able to be served by City water if this project is awarded. We should know in June if we are awarded this grant and the design and construction will probably begin in 2002.

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

Mayor Raines opened the public hearing.

Present from Hoot Owl Hollow was Mr. Fred Wood who asked how and if all the residents had to sign up for water service and if there were any plans for sewer at this time.

Mr. Ward advised that someone will be sent to each residence to fill out a questionnaire. Those residences in the County would have to apply. If this project is funded, the connection will be free.

He further advised that there are no plans for sewer in Hoot Owl Hollow at this time.

There being no further public input, Mayor Raines closed the public hearing.

There were no questions or comments from Council following the public hearing and upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES - Hunnicutt, Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO - None, ABSENT - None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the Preparation and Filing of a Joint Application for a Community Improvement Grant Under the Community Development Block Grant Program of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
(Insert)

Mayor Raines advised that he felt that this resolution should be hand-delivered to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

A public hearing was held on a budget amendment to the 2000-01 budget of the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$89,438.80.

Dr. John Sessoms, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, was present and spoke briefly to Council on this request and answered Council's questions 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 Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a budget amendment to the Norton City Schools 2000-2001 budget for E-Rate Funds in the amount of \$24,270.79.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a budget amendment to the 2000-2001 Norton City Schools budget in the amount of \$65,168.01.

The total of both of these budget amendments to the Norton City Schools 2000-2001 budget was \$89,438.80.

Mr. Blaine Delaney of Black Diamond Resource Conservation & Development, Inc. was present to discuss with Council the first strategic plan of the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable. The Black Diamond RC&D played a strategic role in creating this broad-based coalition to address water quality issues in this two million acre basin, which is

19857

19858

drained by the Clinch, Powell, and Holston rivers. Also present was Mr. Ken Lyons of Norton who is a member of the Roundtable.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Delaney asked Council to look over this strategic plan.

Mayor Raines thanked Mr. Delaney for his efforts and this report.

Council had in their packets A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia Approving Participation in a Collective Process to Renew Adelpia's Cable Franchise Agreement, with the Terms and Conditions for Renewal to be Negotiated by the Franchise Advisory Board.

Mr. Ward advised that at a previous meeting, Mayor Raines and Councilman Fawbush had been appointed by Council as their representatives to the Franchise Advisory Committee. This Committee felt that it was best to for each locality to adopt a resolution to bind them together. The county and all the towns except St. Paul will be asked to adopt a resolution similar to this stating that they do support a joint collective process to gain franchise renewal with Adelpia. It was felt that if we worked as one voice jointly we would be able to better negotiate a franchise that would be more conducive to what we would want to see in a cable television franchise. In May, the group will meet again to see what localities have opted in and start the process of a joint franchise negotiation with the localities that have done so. The City Administration would recommend that Council adopt this resolution to show our willingness to cooperate with the other towns in the county to work jointly together in negotiating a franchise agreement.

19859

At this time, Vice Mayor Mays advised that due to a conflict he would be abstaining from any discussion or vote on this topic.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following vote: YES - Hunnicutt, Wallace, Fawbush, Raines, NO - None, ABSENT - None, ABSTAIN - Mays, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia Approving Participation in a Collective Process to Renew Adelpia's Cable Franchise Agreement, with the Terms and Conditions for Renewal to be Negotiated by the Franchise Advisory Board. (Insert)

Council had in their packets A Resolution Authorizing the Formation of the Southwest Regional Jail Authority.

Mr. Ward advised that, by adoption of this resolution, Council would be showing their consent to participate in the formation of a Southwest Regional Jail Authority.

The City opted to participate in the Regional Jail Task Force, the entity that has been driving the regional jail system so far. The Task Force, at its last meeting, had legal representation present, and the resolution in the packet was drafted by them. If Council chooses to adopt this resolution, they would be agreeing to the formation of the Regional Jail Authority and to the authorization to enter into debt, construct jails, acquire property, hire staff, etc. Also in the resolution is the make-up of the Board. Each participating jurisdiction would have three members on the Authority itself, one of which shall be the Sheriff. The other two members would be appointed by City Council; however they have already been named by this resolution, and are the City Manager and the Mayor. City Council has the authority to set the terms of the other two members or to appoint someone other than those designated. There is a corresponding item under closed session

19860

to discuss the appointments for the other two positions that are now going to be occupied by the Mayor and City Manager.

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES - Hunnicutt, Wallace, Mays, Fawbush, Raines, NO - None, ABSENT -None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Authorizing the Formation of the Southwest Regional Jail Authority.
(Insert)

Council had a request to enter into a Municipal Lease/Purchase for a new backhoe.

Mr. Ward advised that the City Administration had requested a new backhoe to be included in the 2001-02 Fiscal Year Budget. The City has two backhoes, the oldest of which is a 1978 Case with approximately 36,000 hours of use on it. This backhoe has experienced some problems and is now inoperable. It will cost approximately \$2000-\$3000 to get it back in service. Rather than invest this amount of money in an old piece of equipment, he would like to have Council's permission to negotiate a Municipal Lease Purchase Agreement this month to purchase a new backhoe for an amount not to exceed \$55,000. If the City can enter into a 60 month municipal lease the payments would be approximately \$1,000 per month. The next year's payment schedule would be included in the upcoming budget. The two or three payments that will have to be made this fiscal year would come from our current budget.

19861

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Joseph Fawbush, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to advertise for a new backhoe and to enter into a Municipal Lease Purchase Agreement for an amount not to exceed \$55,000.

Council had a copy of a check in the amount of \$155,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools.

19862

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a check in the amount of \$155,000 made payable to the Norton City Schools.

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per 2.1-344(A) (1) of the Code of Virginia as amended.

19863

Mayor Raines declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to go into open meeting.

19864

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 aye. 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, Fawbush, Raines, NO - None, ABSENT - None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

19865

Mayor Raines opened the floor for nominations to the Southwest Regional Jail Authority.

Joseph Fawbush nominated Mayor Robert Raines for a two year term and City Manager E. W. Ward for a four year term.

19866

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

Mayor Raines declared Mayor Robert Raines appointed for a two year term and City Manager E. W. Ward appointed for a four year term to the Southwest Regional Jail Authority.

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

Council had in their packets an invitation to the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the AT&T Relay Center to be held on April 5th from 2:00 - 4:00. Council is invited and encouraged to attend.

On Friday, March 30th, he and Assistant City Manager Fred Ramey attended a meeting at the Virginia Department of Transportation in Wise on the traffic signal project for the City. Davis Elliott Company of Roanoke was awarded the contract. The Notice to Proceed was issued on March 30th and the completion date is fixed at November 1st.

19867

The City of Norton Water Plant entered a state competition and won the Virginia Rural Water Association Water System of the year. Mr. Ward passed the plaque the City was presented for Council to see. Mr. Ward wanted to extend his congratulations to the Water Plant Staff for the work they are doing.

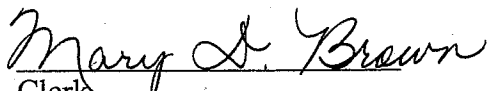
Also during a recent Virginia Rural Water Association Meeting in Roanoke, the City of Norton won the Water Taste Contest out of 20 systems who submitted samples.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA


B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:


Clerk