

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Mark Caruso, Joseph Hunnicutt, William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Terry Roop

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

Prior to the invocation, Mayor Mays asked for a moment of silence in memory of Dr. David Prior, Chancellor of the University of Virginia's College at Wise, who passed away unexpectedly last week. The invocation was then given by Rev. John Ellington and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James C. Lane.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2012 meeting as presented.

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During the Mayor's call for visitors, Cindy Mefford of the Junction Center for Independent Living, spoke briefly to Council explaining the services they provide for local individuals with disabilities. She provided handouts to Council members prior to the meeting. She advised they would be sending Council a request for funding in the upcoming budget and asked for their favorable consideration.

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Sherry Adams, Highland Avenue, spoke briefly to Council regarding school consolidation with Wise County. She asked that Council be mindful of the community and asked that a referendum decide the issue of consolidation.

Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Mefford and Ms. Adams for their comments.

Council had a request from the Pro-Art Association requesting the approval of a Local Government Challenge Grant Application.

Representing Pro-Art was Bonnie Elosser, Executive Director, and Mr. Robert Isaac, Board Member. Ms. Elosser, after giving handouts to Council members, advised this is an annual request and asked that Council allocate up to \$5,000, which will be matched by state funds.

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Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to provide \$5,000 in this next budget year for the Local Government Challenge Grant Application with \$500 of these funds to go to the Harris Gallery of the Lonesome Pine Regional Library in Wise. The City Manager is also authorized to submit this application. These funds will be matched by the State and will go to the Pro-Art Association.

In their packets, Council had a request from Eddie Sharpe, a coach of the Scholastic Bowl Team at J. I. Burton High School.

Present tonight representing this team was Sherry Beauchamp, another coach of this team, and her daughter, Emily, who is a team member. Council was advised that the team had won the district, region, and are now going to the state finals in Williamsburg and they were seeking \$300 from Council to help with the expenses.

Councilman Roop advised he was very proud of the athletic team and their coaches.

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve \$300 for the J. I. Burton Scholastic Bowl Team to help defray expenses on their trip to state finals in Williamsburg. These funds will come from Contingency.

Council congratulated the team members present, wished them good luck, and gave them a round of applause.

Council had been given a draft of the Second Service Agreement with the Coeburn-Norton-Wise Regional Wastewater Authority along with a copy of the first agreement, which is now expired since the debt for same has been paid.

Mr. Ward advised that he had compared the two agreements and there are some differences that need to be discussed. He stated he would like for the City Attorney to look over these two documents and bring his comments back to Council. He further advised this is a very important document that will be used for the next twenty years. He stated he would answer any questions Council may have.

Following a brief discussion, the City Attorney advised that, in order for him to expedite his review, he would like for Council members to send their comments to Mr. Ward, and the City Manager will, in turn, forward them to him.

Mr. Ward stated that the City is already receiving phone calls regarding fishing at the upper reservoir. He advised that due to the project that was started last year at this location, the reservoir was closed. There is currently a winter shutdown and operations will begin again in April with completion, weather permitting, in the June-July timeframe.

The City Manager advised that fishing will be restricted due to the construction of the labyrinth weir and hopefully will be allowed by the boat ramp. He asked Council's guidance as to whether we should sell 2012 licenses or if anything can be done to suspend the requirement for purchasing 2012 licenses as is stipulated in the City Code.

Councilman Caruso stated he felt that "Restricted from Dam Area" should be included on licenses should the City sell them this year.

Following a discussion which included comments on altering our ordinance currently in place and advice from the City Attorney, it was the consensus of Council to proceed with the sale of 2012 fishing licenses.

Council had a request from the Treasurer for a refund of 2011 personal property taxes to Martha Bryant in the amount of \$54.20 which was erroneously assessed.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a refund to Martha Bryant in the amount of \$54.20.

In their packets, Council had a request to approve a transfer in the amount of \$158,000 to the Norton City Schools to cover payroll and fringes.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a transfer in the amount of \$158,000 to the Norton City Schools to cover payroll and fringes. (Insert – Councilman Roop’s Disclosure Form)

Upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call 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.

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Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Hunnicutt, 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 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 Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Hunnicutt, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – None, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

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There were no comments from the City Manager and City Attorney.

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In comments from Council, Councilman Roop stated he wished to encourage the City staff to attack the dilapidated properties located in the City and commended the City Attorney for his work on the delinquent tax sales.

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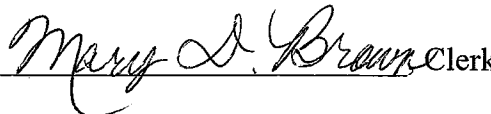
Councilman Caruso stated he concurred with Councilman Roop.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned in order that Council could go into a work session with the City of Norton School Board.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Mary D. Brown, Clerk