

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 2, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

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

Absent: Joseph Hunnicutt

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Rev. John Ellington and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the March 19, 2013 meeting as presented.

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

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Mr. Ramey advised that Council had discussed at its last two meetings a request from the Wise County Public Service Authority to move a sewer meter approximately 1,300 linear feet. At Council's last meeting, there was a discussion on items to be included in an agreement that will be submitted to both the PSA and Wise County. Based on the discussion, the City Attorney has drafted an agreement and a copy is in Council's packet.

Mr. Bradshaw advised that he had incorporated the points Council had discussed and gave a brief synopsis of the agreement.

Mr. Ramey advised the next step was to send this agreement to the Wise County PSA and Wise County for review.

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Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to accept the agreement as presented and further authorized the City Manager to make any minor changes or corrections on this agreement, and that he is to forward same to both the Wise County and the PSA.

At Council's previous meeting, Wellmont representatives were present with a request for a property tax exemption for the Southwest Virginia Cancer Center property. Council requested that Wellmont supply them with some information regarding this request. Information was supplied to Council and included in their packets. Present tonight representing Wellmont was Fred Pelle and Matthew Tavenner. Mr. Pelle advised Council he would be happy to answer any questions they may have.

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Mayor Mays advised Mr. Pelle and Mr. Tavenner that he appreciates the promptness in supplying Council the information; however the City is going to be experiencing a very tight budget this year and Council cannot, until after the budget process is completed, consider granting this request. All Council members stated they would like to grant this request; however they agreed with Mayor Mays who then asked to have this item tabled. It was the consensus of Council to do so.

The City Attorney then advised that Council should not make a decision on this request until July in order that they can get through the budget process and see what type of a impact this would have on City finances.

Mr. Pelle advised he understood that the City has to do the best it can and thanked Council for their consideration.

Councilman Caruso advised Mr. Pelle and Mr. Tavenner that Council considers Wellmont a partner to the City.

Dr. Scott Hamilton, President of Mountain Empire Community College, presented Council with an update on activities at the College. Enrollment is down 9.91% in full time equivalent (FTE), which is consistent with other rural areas in the state and dual enrollment is on the upswing and amounts to approximately 20% of their full time equivalent (FTE) this semester. The new project being conducted by J. I. Burton High School wherein the students are bused to the campus is a very positive program and is working well.

Regarding budget, they have taken cost saving moves and construction projects are progressing. He then advised Council he would answer any questions they may have.

Mayor Mays thanked Dr. Hamilton for his semi-annual update.

Councilman Roop stated he appreciated both Mountain Empire Community College and Dr. Hamilton and advised that they offered lots of free opportunities for students to be able to attend the college.

Todd Christensen, Director of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation, gave Council an update on the activities of the Friends of Southwest Virginia and also shared a short video for Council to see. Via a PowerPoint presentation, he showed Council a map connecting the major venues and advised that the area in which the City is located will be known as the "High Knob Recreation Area".

Updates were then given on the activities of the Crooked Road, Heartwood, and Round the Mountain by Diana Blackburn. She advised that the Crooked Road will be included in the U S Airways Magazine (February issue) along with Liverpool, England, Seattle, Las Vegas, Mississippi, and New Orleans as one of the best musical pilgrimages.

Mr. Christensen thanked Council for their time, advised he appreciated their support, and he looked forward to continuing to work with the City.

Mr. Ramey thanked Mr. Christensen for helping with the City's new video which has been a big hit on our website.

Mr. Ramey also took this time to advise Council that Mr. Christensen, an employee with the Virginia Department of Housing and Urban Development, was instrumental with the City receiving funding on the Downtown Revitalization Project and the Hotel Norton Project. Mr. Christensen advised that two of the best CDBG projects in the Commonwealth were the Hotel Norton and the Laurel Trails Sub-Division.

At this time, Mayor Mays recognized Bill and Nancy Jones, who had accompanied Mr. Christensen and Ms. Blackburn to tonight's meeting. Mr. Jones thanked Council for doing a good job.

The City Manager advised in January or early February, Council had discussed refinancing the Enterprise Fund Debt. Davenport and Company was authorized to submit

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an application to the Virginia Resources Authority and they have advised that we have received an offer.

Mr. Dan Siegel and Kyle Laux of Davenport and Company presented Council with an update on the potential refinancing of the Utility Fund's 2002 Rural Development Loan and 2003 Virginia Resources Authority Bonds. They provided Council with a booklet containing two scenarios.

Mr. Laux advised the 2002 Rural Development Loan totals \$900,000 and will be paid in full in 2042 and the 2003 Virginia Resources Authority Bonds totals \$860,000 and will be paid off in 2029.

The approach they are recommending is a Level Debt Service Savings and should lower the interest rate from 4.68% to a 3.78% with a total savings of \$210,800. They have provided Council with a resolution which, if adopted, will allow the City to proceed with the refinancing.

Following a discussion, Mr. Laux and Mr. Siegel answered questions from Council members. Mr. Ramey advised there had been some slight modifications to the resolution in Council's packet and he had given each member the newer resolution. The City Attorney advised he has checked and approved this newer resolution. He further advised he had read both the agreement and the resolution and they are in proper form; however he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the City of Norton, Virginia Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a Not To Exceed \$1,950,000 Public Improvement and Utility Refunding Bond, Series 2013 and Providing for the Form, Details, and Payment Thereof. (Insert)

Council had been provided with a copy of a Proclamation of National Public Safety 911 Telecommunicators Week April 14th – 20th, 2013

Mr. Ramey advised this week was set by President Obama and a proclamation was adopted last year. In 2012, the City's E-911 Center answered 4,016 9-1-1 calls and 41,207 non-emergency calls. He further advised that the City dispatchers had experienced a tough year due to training in new equipment and software. The City is very lucky to have really good employees doing such a great job.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Proclamation Declaring National Public Safety 911 Telecommunicators Week as April 14th – April 20th, 2013. (Insert)

In their packets, Council had been given a copy of a Resolution Recognizing National Service Recognition Day on April 9, 2013. Mr. Ramey advised this information was forwarded to him by Michael Wampler, the new Executive Director of the Mountain Empire Older Citizens and Bill Dotson, Director of the Foster Grandparent Program.

Upon a motion by Councilman Roop, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Caruso, Fawbush, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, Council moved to adopt A Resolution Recognizing National Service Recognition Day on April 9, 2013. (Insert)

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

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Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Norton Tourism Committee to fill an unexpired term which will expire on September 30, 2016.

Councilman Caruso nominated Chris Jones.

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

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Mayor Mays declared Chris Jones appointed to the Norton Tourism Committee to fill an unexpired term which will expire on September 30, 2016.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the 2013 Virginia Municipal League Policy Committees.

Councilman Fawbush nominated Fred Ramey to the Community & Economic Development Committee and the General Laws Committee, Andrew Greear to the Environmental Quality Committee, Jeff Shupe to the Finance Committee, Roger Ramey to the Human Development & Education Committee, and Steve McElroy to the Transportation Committee as recommended by the City Administration.

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

Mayor Mays declared the above slate of individuals appointed to the 2013 Virginia Municipal League Policy Committees as recommended by the City Administration.

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

The Parks & Recreation Director and Crew are hard at work to get Flag Rock open. Weather permitting, they hope it will be open by next week.

Shelly Knox, Parks and Recreation Director, is working on the spring stocking of fish for the reservoir. The opening day is the 15th of April.

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There were no comments by the City Attorney.

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In comments from Council, Councilman Roop congratulated Mr. Ramey on being voted Mr. Norton and stated the City was very lucky to have him.

Councilman Fawbush stated Norton was well represented in this contest held by the Coalfield Progress among the selections were: The City Manager, Best Fireman (Marty Hagy), Parks and Recreation locations, and others.

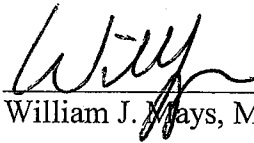
Councilman Caruso stated some trees have fallen on the trail around the reservoir and some limbs around the lower reservoir also need to be picked up. Also, there is a pile or rubble on the road out from Flag Rock that goes up to the dam that needs to be cleared. The City Manager advised there is a drainage problem at that location. It is going to be worked on and hopefully, the rocks can be moved. He will check on it.

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Mayor Mays asked how the mountain bike trail was coming and was advised by the City Manager that it is progressing; however it is a slow process due to the terrain.

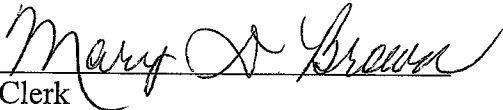
There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk