

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 21, 2013 in the Municipal Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: William Mays, Joseph Fawbush, and Terry Roop

Absent: Mark Caruso and Joseph Hunnicutt

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

The invocation was given by Father Tim Drake.

At this time, Councilman Caruso arrived at the meeting and led the pledge of allegiance.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the May 7, 2013 meeting as presented.

25800

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Mr. Eddie Fultz, 904 Campbell Avenue, N. W. handed out a packet to Council and asked for an amendment to a previously issued Special Use Permit dated October 28, 2008. Mr. Fultz wishes to put in a moveable utility building of no more than 200 square feet on City right-of-way.

Councilman Fawbush advised that he would abstain from discussion and vote on this as Mr. Fultz had advised that he would be purchasing this utility building from Valley Utility Buildings, which is owned by Councilman Fawbush's brother.

25801

Following a brief discussion and Council's review of a PowerPoint presentation, a motion was made by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by the following roll call vote: YES – Caruso, Roop, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Hunnicutt, ABSTAIN – Fawbush, Council moved to grant an amendment to the Special Use Permit of October 2008 to include the installation of a moveable utility building of up to 200 square feet on City right-of-way.

A public hearing was held on the proposed 2013-2014 budget of the Norton City Schools.

Mr. Ramey advised that Dr. Comer, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, was present and he gave a brief synopsis of this budget to Council. At the conclusion of his synopsis, Dr. Comer commended Council for their support of the school system.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

25802

In comments from Council members, Councilman Caruso asked if the budget included the prior year surplus and the City Manager responded that it was not in the budget

There being no further comments, Mayor Mays advised action will be taken on this budget at the June 4<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting. (Insert – Councilman Roop's Disclosure Form)

A public hearing was held to amend the 2012-2013 General Operating Fund Budget by \$7,822 and the Department of Social Services Budget in the amount of \$24,443 for additional appropriation for the Comprehensive Services Act.

25803

Mr. Ramey advised that Chairperson, Dawn Gilbert, of the City of Norton Community Policy and Management Board, explained issues the Comprehensive Services Act Program budget was having during Council's last meeting. There has been a slight increase this year and an additional local funding of \$7,822 is needed to carry them over. These funds will be matched by the State.

At this time, Councilman Hunnicutt took his seat on Council.

25804

Roger Ramey, Social Services Director for the City, advised they had exceeded their budget amount due to an increase in families and children who participate in this program.

Mayor Mays opened the public hearing.

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

Councilman Caruso had questions regarding these additional funds and Mr. Ramey responded to these.

25805

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Hunnicutt, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to amend the 2012-2013 General Operating Fund Budget by \$7,822 and the Department of Social Service Budget in the amount of \$24,443 for an additional appropriation for the Comprehensive Services Act.

Dr. Jeff Comer, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, spoke briefly to Council regarding the School Board's request to establish an Enterprise Fund Account similar to their Text Book Fund and Retirement Fund Accounts. He then passed out a survey which will be applicable to this request.

Following his discussion with Council on their budget and surplus funds, he turned the podium over to Sherry Adams, a member of the School Board and their newly formed Finance Committee. She advised this Enterprise Fund Account would be used to cover any items that may come up that need to be handled and Council would not have to be asked for these funds. To establish the account, she stated the Board is asking Council for \$100,000 of the \$209,000 surplus they have this year with the remaining \$109,000 to stay with the City. She then advised she would be willing to answer any questions Council may have.

25806

Following a lengthy discussion during which Ms. Adams answered questions from Council, it was the consensus of Council that this is a very good idea; however, this budget year is a very tight one for the City; therefore they will not be able to fund the \$100,000 appropriation requested tonight for the establishment of an Enterprise Fund Account. Councilman Caruso advised the City had been very bold taking on ten million dollars of school debt with City revenues declining.

Councilman Fawbush stated that there should be a Memorandum of Understanding to implement a CIP Plan and Councilman Caruso stated he would like to have quarterly meetings with both Boards.

Mayor Mays advised he feels the Finance Committee is on the right track and Council does not want to discourage them; however this is just not the time to ask for additional appropriations. (Insert – Councilman Roop’s Disclosure Form)

Michele Knox, Parks and Recreation Director for the City, gave Council an update on her scheduled summer activities. She will be having an Engineering Camp, Electrical Camp, Basketball, Dodge Ball, Volleyball, River Walks Camps, and a Tennis Camp. She presented Council members with a flyer showing the Norton Friends & Farmers Market will be opening June 4<sup>th</sup>, Fantastic Fridays Waterslides at various City parks, and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities which includes the fireworks display and activities downtown. There will also be water slides and other activities held during the Best Friend Festival.

25807

She also advised the Flag Rock sign has been refurbished and repainted and a kiosk from Legion Park has been relocated to the reservoir.

Mr. Ramey advised these activities are marketed on the City’s web page, Facebook page, and flyers have been handed out at the schools.

Council Fawbush stated he appreciated Ms. Knox’s work on these activities and appreciated Councilman Roop’s suggestion for doing these classes.

Councilman Roop stated he would like to commend Ms. Knox on the summer camps she has planned and stated it is money well spent.

The City Manager presented Council with a PowerPoint presentation on the 2013-2014 fiscal budget for the City.

He advised there had been a few changes since Council had last seen it. The May 21<sup>st</sup> total on this budget is \$9,456,412 and includes the Social Service increase. Modifications included in this budget are the increase in the Vehicle Decal License from \$15.00 to \$20.00 per vehicle which will bring in an additional \$15,000 in revenues. There are no COLA raises for employees other than those mandated by the State for their employees, and VRS, one full time position has been eliminated, as have six part time positions, and there are no capital projects.

He advised that Councilman Caruso had made some suggestions on cutting back on some of the appropriations for discretionary agencies. He then defined the cuts Councilman Caruso had made. Following a lengthy discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso in which he proposed to amend the 2013-2014 budget in accordance with the suggestions he made on the appropriations to various agencies which totals \$29,000. This motion died due to a lack of a second.

25808

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Roop, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to amend the proposed 2013-2014 budget as follows: Southwest Heritage Commission from \$7,500 to \$4,000, SWVA Recreation Authority from \$2,000 to \$1,500, and Christmas Decorations from \$2,000 to \$0, which totals \$6,000 to be moved to Contingency. It was also the consensus of Council for Mr. Ramey to advertise the budget at Council’s next meeting to be held on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

The City Manager presented Council with the status of proposed Enterprise Fund Projects. The first of these projects is the lower dam improvements.

25809

At this time, Councilman Hunnicutt left the meeting due to illness.

25810

Mr. Ramey advised that at this point, the City can't include this as a capital project and wants guidance from Council as to whether we should move forward with this project. On May 15, 2012, Council authorized two grant applications to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund. The first application covered design leak repairs with an estimated cost of \$26,400 and the second application was for stability evaluation testing at an estimated cost of \$106,500. DCR offered \$8,500 for each project and Lenowisco awarded a \$15,000 grant for design assistance. The construction phase (Phase II) is estimated to cost \$238,500 and we have not identified funding for this phase. He asked if we should reject the DCR funding and request permission to reallocate grant funding to an IFLOWS Project. It was the consensus of Council to decline the DCR funding and hopefully continue this project at a later date. The Lenowisco funds can be transferred to another project.

The second project is the Phase III of the Water System Improvement Projects which covers the central portion of the City's residential/commercial area. Phase II, which was in the East Park Avenue/Poplar Street area, is nearly completed. We are currently bidding the Phase I improvements which is in the 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Dorchester areas. Phase III is the central business district and the City Council authorized the City Administration to apply for funding in February of 2012 and a financing offer from the Virginia Department of Health was received in August. The total project is estimated to be \$879,000. Of this amount, \$483,000 will be a loan for 30 years at 2-1/2% interest and \$395,750 is a grant. In August of 2012, Council directed the City Manger to seek a 50/50 funding package from VDH. He proceeded to do so and this attempt was not successful. Council then accepted the loan and grant funding originally offered. The City has since advertised for professional design services, but has not selected a firm, nor have any of the funds been spent on the project.

25811

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of Council to proceed with this project.

The City Manager passed out to Council members a copy of a draft Vehicle Decal Ordinance that needs to be adopted by the end of the fiscal year. With Council's approval, he would like to place this ordinance on the agenda for the next meeting and advertise a public hearing on it.

25812

The City Attorney, Mr. Bradshaw, advised this is a good ordinance and will work for the City.

It was the consensus of Council for the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the ordinance for the next meeting.

In their packets, Council had a copy of a check made payable to the Norton Industrial Development Authority in the amount of \$122,004.25.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to approve a check to NIDA as specified above.

25813

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section No. 2.1-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended. 25814  
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 into open meeting. 25815  
Mayor Mays declared Council back in open meeting.

Mayor Mays opened the floor for a nomination to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a five year term which will expire on June 2, 2018.

Councilman Caruso nominated Joe Buchanan to be nominated for another term on this Board. 25816

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

Mayor Mays declared the name of Joe Buchanan be submitted to the Wise County Circuit Court Judge for reappointment to the City of Norton Board of Zoning Appeals for a five year term which will expire on June 2, 2018.

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

The VRA Refinancing Bond Issue will be finalized by June 5<sup>th</sup> and the closing on the City's portion will be May 30<sup>th</sup>. Based on the actual results of the bond issuance on May 9<sup>th</sup>, the City will actually realize a gross savings of over \$217,000. 25817

The annual Business Appreciation Luncheon, which is co-sponsored by the Norton Industrial Development Authority, will be held on Wednesday, May 29, at 11:30 a.m. at the Mountain Empire Community College. City Council members are invited to attend.

There were no comments from the City Attorney.

Mayor Mays stated he could see from the packet that Mr. Bradshaw had been busy. 25818  
Mr. Bradshaw advised they were working on more tax suits and some of the larger ones may soon be resolved.

In comments from Council:

Councilman Roop advised he would like to see one more property cleaned up before long. Mr. Ramey advised the Building Official was working on this.

Mayor Mays advised there had been a large bear in his neighborhood last week. Mr. Ramey advised there had been an increase on bear complaints in the City. 25819

Councilman Fawbush applauded Sherry Adams of the City of Norton School Board for her presentation tonight. He stated she is working toward better communication between the Boards. He reiterated that the City needs an adopted documented capital improvement list.

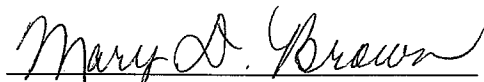
Councilman Caruso asked the City Manager for a quick update on the Safe Routes to School Project and Mr. Ramey gave Council an update on this.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William J. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Clerk