

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, April 18, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor William Mays presiding.

Present: Dee Belcher, William Mays, Robert Fultz, Jr., and Joseph Fawbush

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

Absent: Mark Caruso

The invocation was given by Minister Gary Hill and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief James Lane.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the April 4, 2017, meeting as presented. 26281

At this time, Mayor Mays welcomed Stephen Lawson, Town Manager of Big Stone Gap and participant of Wise County/City of Norton Forward Wise County. 26282

There was no response to the Mayor's Call for Visitors.

Ms. Gina Wohlford, Superintendent of the Norton City Schools, presented Council with a brief PowerPoint presentation on the school system's proposed 2017-2018 budget.

Ms. Wohlford advised that the proposed budget is based on a projected enrollment of 750 students. She noted a decrease of \$215,031 in state funding, due to enrollment loss, and an expenditure increase of \$80,000 to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), which is a result of previously taken legislative action, were the two major factors that guided this year's budget. She said the School Board has budgeted realistically and evaluated several items such as, student dual enrollment fees, extended contracts, coaching and extra-duty supplements, insurance, vacancies, and other items to offset the decrease in state funding.

Following her presentation, she advised the school system is asking for a total of \$2,491,871 in local funding, of which \$1,655,643 is local operations, \$812,705 is debt service, and \$23,523 is Textbook Fund. Ms. Wohlford advised the School Board is asking for level funding from City Council. 26283

Ms. Wohlford noted, prior to her presentation, she provided Council with a copy of the school's line item budget and that she would answer any questions from Council members.

Following a brief discussion, Councilman Fultz congratulated Ms. Wohlford on being named the Superintendent of Norton City Schools at the previous night's school board meeting. He also said people are excited about the outlook of Norton City Schools and the opportunities you will provide the school system in the future.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to authorize the City Manager to advertise a public hearing on the proposed Norton City School Budget of \$8,797,038.

Mayor Mays thanked Ms. Wohlford for the board's hard work on the budget and said it has been a difficult year for the City and the school system.

In their packets, Council had been presented with A Resolution Defining Signature and Access Requirements for Various City Accounts, Investments, and Certificate Storage.

Mr. Ramey advised that if any time signature modifications are needed City Council must adopt a new resolution. The resolution before Council contains one signature modification related to the Norton Department of Social Services. Ms. Sara R. Ring, the current Director of Norton Social Services, is replacing the City's former Social Services Director Christine Blair.

26284

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Fawbush, and passed by following unanimous roll call vote, YES – Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSTAIN – None, ABSENT – Caruso, Council moved to adopt a Resolution Defining Signature and Access Requirements for Various City Accounts, Investments, and Certificate Storage. (Insert)

Mr. Ramey stated for the past several years the U.S. Forest Service has been considering a Vegetative Management Project in the Nettle Patch. The U.S. Forest Service recently submitted its Environmental Assessment of this project to the City for review. Since the City is actively developing trails and promoting tourism in the Flag Rock Recreation Area, which is adjacent to Nettle Patch, Council has been concerned about the impact the U. S. Forest Service's project will have on these initiatives. As a result, City Administration has drafted a letter to be submitted to the U. S. Forest Service conveying Council's concern about the forest and how it relates to the City's efforts to promote tourism in the High Knob area. The letter asks the U. S. Forest Service to exclude any area surrounding Norton in the project that might negatively impact current and future tourism activities and economic development. Upon Council's approval, the letter will be submitted to the U.S. Forest Service for consideration as the Forest Service moves forward with the Nettle Patch Vegetative Management Project.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council authorized the Mayor to sign the letter to the U. S. Forest Service, as presented.

Council had one transfer to confirm. This transfer was to Norton City Schools, dated March 28, 2017, in the amount of \$100,000 to cover March 2017 payroll expenditures. The memo also included a transfer request in the amount of \$25,562 to the Textbook Bank Account.

26286

Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Fultz, Fawbush, Belcher, Mays, NO – None, ABSENT – Caruso, ABSTAIN – None, Council moved to confirm the transfer to Norton City Schools in the amount of \$100,000 to cover March 2017 payroll expenditures.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, Council moved to go into closed meeting to discuss personnel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia, as amended, and discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publically held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely

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affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

Mayor Mays declared Council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, 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.

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Upon a motion by Councilman Fawbush, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting. (Insert)

Mayor Mays opened the floor for nominations to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board for a four-year term to expire on May 2, 2021.

Councilman Fultz nominated Richard Stan Wilson to be reappointed to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board for a four-year term to expire on May 2, 2021.

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

Mayor Mays declared Richard Stan Wilson reappointed to the Wise County/City of Norton Youth Services Board for a four-year term to expire on May 2, 2021.

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

The treasurer has mailed real estate tax tickets.

At the next meeting there will be two presentations. First, the winners of the G2K Games Entrepreneurial Competition held at University of Virginia's College at Wise will address Council. Secondly, University of Maryland graduate student Dylan Reilly, has successfully defended his master thesis on the proposed Norton Riverwalk, and as promised, he will return to Norton to present his final project to City Council.

He placed at each member's desk a copy of the latest monthly Retail Sales Tax Report and a copy of the City's March Financials.

26291

Clean Your Files Day is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, in the Magic Mart Parking Lot.

The City will be sending a team to Radford on Saturday, April 22, 2017, to participate in the Third Annual Virginia's Outdoor Lovers Expo for Southwest Virginia.

The Great American Cleanup is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Saturday, April 29, 2017, to clean up areas throughout the city. Participants are asked to meet at the Municipal Parking Lot to receive trash bags, gloves, and grabbers to collect garbage.

There were no comments by the City Attorney.

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At this time, Norton City Schools Superintendent Gina Wohlford reminded Council that Norton Elementary and Middle School will present "Seussical the Musical" at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 19, and Friday, April 21, at John I. Burton High School.

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In comments from Council:

Councilman Fultz said John I. Burton's prom is scheduled for Saturday, April 22, at Hotel Norton with the after prom party to be held at Cinema City 9 – Stadium Theatres.

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Councilwoman Belcher thanked City Administration for all the work they do and for the numerous hours spent working for the city.

She also thanked City Attorney Bill Bradshaw for his work and said he is an asset to the city.

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Councilwoman Belcher commented to Police Chief James Lane to remind his officers to be safe during these bizarre times.

She advised the school system to keep up the good work.

Councilman Fawbush said he has been advised by an avid hunter that if Flag Rock Recreation Area is designated a recreation area that hunting is prohibited by state law. He said Council will need to ascertain if this statement is true, as well as, determine if the entire park is designated as a recreation area.

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Mr. Ramey said Flag Rock Recreation Area is zoned Conservation and Recreation and the two different terminologies may need to be clarified by the City Attorney.

Mr. Bradshaw advised he would try to provide Council with a quick interpretation of the state code concerning the conservation and recreation designations

Mayor Mays had no comments, but stated Council would take a five minute break before returning for a budget work session.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
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William Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council

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