

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, August 6, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Joseph Fawbush presiding.

Present: William Mays, Robert Fultz, Jr., Joseph Fawbush, Mark Caruso, and Delores Belcher

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

The invocation was given by Pastor Roger Sloce and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Sergeant Greg Mays.

Prior to the meeting, council was presented amended council minutes from the July 16, 2019 meeting. In the city manager's comments, the date of the Woodbooger Geo Cache event was corrected and the High Knob Hellbender and the Woodbooger Festival were added.

263126

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Fawbush, Caruso, and Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to adopt the minutes of the July 16, 2019, meeting as amended.

During the Mayor's Call for Visitors, Ms. Delores Bolling, of 639 Hillcrest Drive, S. E., spoke to council about the recent paving of Hillcrest Drive and weed cutting on city right-of-way.

Ms. Bolling said the city paved Hillcrest Drive, but the street was not milled prior to paving so the road is now higher than her driveway causing water issues on her property. She said water runoff has washed away her yard and she wants to know what repairs the city is considering to stop the water. She suggested the city could spread a mix of dirt and gravel and she could work with the soil mixture to reseed and replant her yard. Ms. Bolling noted there used to be a curb located at her property and that she has requested a ditch on the other side of the road to help handle the water. She said there is a ditch at the bottom of Hillcrest Drive on the opposite side of the road but not at the top of street. She said a new ditch at the top of Hillcrest Drive connected to the ditch at the bottom of the street would help alleviate some of the problem. She also asked the city to cut the weeds along the road on Hillcrest Drive.

263127

Mayor Fawbush told Ms. Bolling he was unaware of the water issue she was experiencing at her property but he did drive up Hillcrest Drive and observed the road had been paved.

Ms. Bolling thanked council and asked that the water issue be addressed quickly since her property is on the market.

Council was given an update on last year's Woodbooger GeoTour and on the upcoming 2019 Woodbooger GeoTrail scheduled Saturday, September 7th, by co-event organizer Rick Watts.

Mr. Watts thanked council for their support and said last year's geocache had a total of 190 participants from 15 states, and the geocache located outside council chambers was the preferred cache of participants receiving 1,062 "favorite votes." Mr. Watts noted that last year's event was a geo-tour and organizers decided to change this year's event back to a geo-trail in order to invest the money back into the event. He then showed council the coin made for this year's participants, adding that 225 coins were produced for this year's Woodbooger

263128

GeoTrail. Mr. Watts said the Norton Woodbooger GeoTour was the first geocache in the Commonwealth and then, via a PowerPoint presentation, he showed some of the creative caches put together for the 2019 event. He said geocachers are always complimentary of the area and word is spreading that Norton is geocache friendly.

Council members thanked Mr. Watts for the great work he is doing.

At this time, Councilman Fultz, a teacher in Norton City Schools, had to leave for eighth grade orientation at John I. Burton High School.

263129

Mayor Fawbush requested that Item 6-B, A Resolution Marking the 125th Anniversary of the Suthers Masonic Lodge #259, Chartered on December 21, 1894, be tabled due to the request of the members.

263130

Mr. Ramey advised he was contacted today requesting the item be placed on council's August 20th agenda due to regional members' desire to be present at the meeting.

Council was in consensus to table Item 6-B until the August 20, 2019, meeting.

Included in council's packet for review were two draft ordinances council authorized at the last meeting, which include possible code modifications related to Highland Cemetery and Chapter 20 – Reservoirs.

Mr. Ramey said city attorney William Bradshaw prepared a draft ordinance for Highland Cemetery that basically recognizes that the city owns Highland Cemetery and that the city manager needs to periodically establish certain rules and regulations that relate to the operation and maintenance of the cemetery.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Bradshaw said the ordinance dealing with Highland Cemetery was designed to be as basic as possible and allows for the city manager to establish rules and regulations for operation and maintenance. He said council would establish fees for cemetery lots, burial services, and other services by resolution and the fees would be adopted by council with the schedule of rates and levies.

The second draft ordinance related to amending Chapter 20 – Reservoir of the Norton City Code to prohibit any gasoline powered watercraft or the possession of any liquid petroleum products at the reservoir, except for motor vehicles used to transport watercraft to the reservoir.

263131

Mr. Bradshaw said city code defines the reservoir as not only the body of water, but also the surrounding area, so the code modification includes the acceptance of the use of gasoline powered motor vehicles to transport watercraft to the reservoir area. However, he said once a person is out of his or her vehicle he or she cannot possess any liquid petroleum-based products.

After a brief discussion, it was decided that the city attorney would amend the draft ordinance to add language that ensured a person who is fishing at the reservoir who had liquid petroleum-based products in his or her possession, but does not have the products outside of his or her vehicle or watercraft is not in violation of the ordinance.

Mr. Ramey added he contacted the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) and asked the department to review the draft ordinance. He said DGIF wanted to know if the ordinance would prevent DGIF from using its electro-gasoline fishing boat every couple of years to count fish in the reservoir. Mr. Ramey said he advised DGIF that the ordinance would prevent the department's use of gasoline-powered watercraft on the reservoir.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of council to amend the ordinance to allow DGIF and emergency services to use gasoline-powered watercraft in the performance of their duties.

Mr. Ramey told council that there was no hurry on either draft ordinance presented in the council packets. He suggested that the city attorney modify the Chapter 20 – Reservoir ordinance as discussed and place the redraft on council’s August 20th agenda for member’s consideration. Mr. Ramey said following these modifications both city code modifications related to Highland Cemetery and Chapter 20 – Reservoirs could be advertised for public hearings and considered at the September 3rd meeting.

It was the consensus of council to place the redraft of Chapter 20 – Reservoir on the August 20th agenda for reconsideration and to consider both draft ordinances at the September 3rd meeting after public hearings have been duly advertised.

Also in packets for council consideration was a transfer to Norton City Schools dated July 8, 2019, in the amount of \$691,415 to cover the General Obligation School Bond, Series 2012 payment.

263132

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Caruso, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES - Mays, Fawbush, Caruso, Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, council moved to confirm the transfer to Norton City Schools, as stated above.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Mays, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Mays, Fawbush, Caruso, and Belcher, NO – None, ABSENT – Fultz, council moved to go into closed meeting for Personnel as per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1), and for the 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 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.

263133

Mayor Fawbush declared council in closed meeting.

After meeting with council during a portion of the closed meeting, the city attorney was excused.

263134

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to go back into open meeting.

263135

Mayor Fawbush 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.

263136

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

In comments from the city manager:

Mr. Ramey said he provided members with a copy of a memo and the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) Study on Fiscal Stress across Virginia.

263137

Mr. Ramey said in 2017 the city received a planning grant to complete a Housing Needs Assessment throughout the city. Recently, the city applied for another planning grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development that will allow the city to focus on a specific neighborhood for a possible Comprehensive Community Improvement Grant. He said city administration is planning the first community meeting next week in the Kentucky Avenue and Southside Community to discuss interest and qualifications for a possible project and the grant also allows for addressing dilapidated housing.

Mr. Ramey said he provided members with a copy of Norton Senior League Girls Softball Team's financial report for the team's recent trip to the State Tournament.

Via a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Ramey shared photos of the historical marker that was recently refurbished and reinstalled in front of the Chamber of Commerce. He said the project was accomplished with the help of Norris Fabrication, Vic's Decorating, Adams Body Shop, and the John I. Burton High School Art Teacher Neil Walker.

Mr. Ramey then shared PowerPoint photos of the updated Norton Farmers Market Building. He said the contractor hit a couple of soft spots in the parking lot and a consultant advised to undercut and place fabric in the soft spots that should solidify the areas. He then showed the work that has been done on the cidery and noted that another underground tank was found and had to be removed from the property. Mr. Ramey said this tank made a total of six tanks that were removed from the property, and he showed pictures of the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) two monitoring wells and a pump to remove petroleum in the ground.

Mr. Ramey placed a copy the latest High Knob and Flag Rock traffic counts on council members' desks for review.

He provided council with the August Activities flyer and the High Knob Outdoor Festival flyer scheduled for Saturday, August 17th.

Mr. Ramey said the city is having a tax sale next week, and he provided council with copies of the tax map that showed the two parcels being sold.

He handed out a flyer on the unveiling of the restored Coca Cola sign and said the ceremony is scheduled for 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 20th.

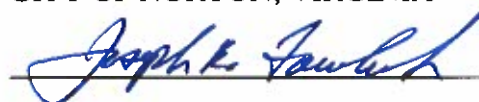
Mr. Ramey said the Woodbooger Geocache will be held Saturday, September 7th, the High Knob Hellbender and the Woodbooger Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 5th, and the Cloudsplitter Ultra 100 Trail Race will take place Saturday, October 12th.

There were no comments from council members.

263138

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



Joseph Fawbush, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council