

## AGENDA

Norton City Council

October 20, 2020

6:00 P.M.

1. Roll Call
2. Invocation
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of Minutes
  1. Meeting of October 6, 2020
5. Audience for Visitors
6. Public Hearing
  - A. Public Hearing to Receive Public Input on a Proposed Amendment to Sec. 23-2(c) of the City Code. The Proposed Amendment is Intended to Reduce the Penalty and Interest Rates on Taxes Due October 15, 2020 to 0.0% for the Period Beginning October 15, 2020 and Ending on November 15, 2020, at Which Time the Provisions of the Proposed Amendment Shall Expire Unless Further Extended by Council.
    1. Public Hearing
    2. Comments by City Council
    3. Consideration by City Council
7. New Business
  - A. Update from the High Knob Music Festival Committee Regarding Renovations to the High Knob Recreation Area.

B. Appointment of Working Officers of the Norton Fire Department.

C. Update on Fire Department Equipment.

D. CARES Act Funding Update.

E. Discussion About the 2020 Christmas Parade.

F. Confirmation of a Check/Transfer in Excess of \$100,000.

G. Closed Meeting for Personnel as Per Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia as Amended.

1. Appointment to the Norton Social Services Advisory Board to Fill the Unexpired Term of Jane Sandt.

To 05/22/24

8. Comments by the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Council.

9. Adjournment.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, October 6, 2020, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Joseph Fawbush presiding.

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

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager, and Jeffery L. Shupe, Finance Director

The invocation was given by Councilman Robert Fultz and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by the 2020 AmeriCorps/National Civilian Conservation Corps Southern Region Team River 5 (AmeriCorps/NCCC Team River 5).

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by the following unanimous vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Belcher, Caruso, Fawbush, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to adopt the minutes of the September 15, 2020, meeting as presented.

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

A public hearing was held to receive public input on a Proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Proposal to be submitted to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the Southside Comprehensive Community Development Project.

Mr. Ramey, via a PowerPoint presentation, showed the area that is considered in the proposed Southside project. He said a public hearing was held in March for this same project but the project did not receive funding. Mr. Ramey told council that DHCD has decided to have a second round of funding this year and city administration would like to resubmit the application and that requires another public hearing.

Mr. Frank Kibler, LENOWISCO Senior Planner, said a few changes were made to the application and he is hopeful the project will be funded this time. He said the application is due the end of October and that the project and funding request are essentially the same as in March.

Mr. Ramey noted that the Southside project includes a waterline replacement component and that the city has received a 70/30 grant proposal from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) with 30 percent being grant funds. He said city administration has not had a chance to review the proposal.

Mr. Ramey told council that the resolution was not in council packets but he has provided members with a copy of the resolution for approval to resubmit the application.

Mayor Fawbush opened the public hearing.

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

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by the following unanimous roll call vote: YES – Mays, Fultz, Belcher, Caruso, Fawbush, NO – None, ABSENT – None, council moved to adopt the Resolution Approving the Resubmittal of the Application to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the Southside Comprehensive Community Development Project.

The next agenda item was an update from the 2020 AmeriCorps/National Civilian Conservation Corps Southern Region Team River 5 (AmeriCorps/NCCC Team River 5).

Mr. Ramey told council that the team may be leaving Saturday and he wanted the team to provide an update on their activities.

Team Leader Sarah Cross stated that the team is on their fourth week in the city and it has been great to be in Norton and to work with Shayne Fields on trail development in the Flag Rock Recreation Area. She said it is great to know that the team will be leaving a lasting mark on the community with the work the team has done on the trail system in Flag Rock Recreation Area.

Several other members spoke to council about their experience in Norton, then Alex Tudela showed a video of the work the AmeriCorps team had completed on the trail system.

Mayor Fawbush told the team that council is glad the team members enjoyed staying in Norton and that the city appreciates the work they have done on the city's trails.

Norton City Trail Coordinator Shayne Fields then called each member of the team to come forward and the mayor presented each member with a plaque and a photo was taken.

Mayor Fawbush then declared council in a 10-minute recess so a group picture could be taken outside with council and the 2020 AmeriCorps/NCCC Team River 5.

After a 10-minute recess, Mayor Fawbush declared council back in open session.

Included in member packets was a request for council to consider refunding of Norton City Financing Bonds, Series 2012C.

Mr. Ramey said the city issued 10 million dollars in debt in 2012 for renovations to Norton Elementary and Middle School (NEMS) and John I. Burton High School and to build a new gymnasium at NEMS. He said the Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) purchased the bonds and the bonds are scheduled to sell on October 20th with settlement expected on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Ramey said it is anticipated that the city could save a total of \$278,000 due to the refunding but the level of savings is subject to change. He said city administration contacted Davenport & Company, Inc., the city's financial advisor, and city attorney William Bradshaw to discuss the refunding. Mr. Ramey said the city has the option of declining the refunding but if the city moves forward with refunding, the city will not have the option to pay off the debt early. He said city administration's recommendation is to opt in on the refunding of the Financing Bonds, Series 2012C.

After a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to authorize the city manager to execute the certificate to opt in on refunding of Norton City Financing Bonds, Series 2012C.

Via a PowerPoint presentation, the city manager provided a funding update on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and city administration's plans moving forward.

Mr. Ramey said the city has expended \$492,474 in COVID19 expenditures and has approximately \$200,000 remaining to release. He highlighted the areas the expenditures were used and noted that a significant portion of the CARES Act funds has included partner organizations. Mr. Ramey said council authorized \$120,000 of the CARES Act funds at the September 15<sup>th</sup> council meeting to purchase a new ambulance, for which, Wise County is paying 60 percent of the total cost. He said other committed funds include \$65,000 for building modifications and \$25,000 for the WIFI Hotspot Project. Mr. Ramey then asked City Development Specialist and City Engineer Stephen L. McElroy to discuss the WIFI Hotspot Project.

Mr. McElroy told council that there have been a few delays in the WIFI Hotspot Project due to lags in receiving equipment but the project is going well. He said the city applied for a \$15,000 grant through United Way to also install a hotspot at city hall.

Mr. Ramey said city administration remitted the second quarterly CARES Act Report to the state yesterday and noted that two staff in city hall tested positive for the Coronavirus. He said city administration took the proper action related to the two COVID-19 cases. Mr. Ramey told council that the second half of real estate and personal property taxes are due October 15<sup>th</sup> and that council may want to consider taking action similar to this past spring and postpone the due date of these taxes to November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Fawbush stated that there was an error in calculating 2020 personal property taxes and additional staff will be required to correct the miscalculations but corrections cannot be made by October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Caruso agreed and said giving citizens another month to pay taxes would be helpful to city taxpayers. Councilman Caruso made the motion that penalty and delinquency rates on delinquent real estate and personal property taxes for the current year provided in City Code Section 23-2 as presently written be set at zero and suspended until November 15, 2020, and to authorize the city manager to advertise a public hearing related to this formal action. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Belcher, passed by unanimous roll call vote, and council moved to set the penalty and delinquency rates on real estate and personal property taxes at zero and suspended until November 15<sup>th</sup>, council also authorized the city manager to advertise a public hearing related to this formal action as stated above.

The next agenda item was discussion of 2020 Halloween, 2020 Christmas Parade, and 2021 Independence Day Celebration holidays.

Mr. Ramey told council that city staff is receiving calls regarding the observance of Halloween and that city administration would like to discuss council's position on proceeding with the holiday. He said some localities are asking citizens not to celebrate Halloween outside the family unit and other localities have offered guidelines. Mr. Ramey said council discussed the Christmas parade at the September 15<sup>th</sup> council meeting but staff has not heard back from parade participants. He noted that two towns have decided to go forward with their Christmas parades and other communities are waiting 30 days before making a decision.

Mayor Fawbush said he would like to move forward with Halloween and provide guidelines to citizens and let the citizens decide if they want to participate in Halloween.

Councilman Fultz noted that Halloween has always been a participate or not participate holiday.

Council members were in agreement with Mayor Fawbush to provide citizens with guidelines and allow the citizens to decide if they want to participate in Halloween.

Mr. Ramey said city administration will place Halloween observance on the city's social media and website and advise The Coalfield Progress and city staff answering phones.

Mayor Fawbush stated that council can discuss the Christmas parade at the October 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Council was in consensus and authorized the city manager to execute an agreement with the fireworks vendor to schedule the fireworks display on July 3, 2021, for the Independence Day Celebration.

Also included in packets for council consideration was a check to W-L Construction & Paving, Inc., dated September 1, 2020, in the amount of \$115,580.49 for paving.

Upon a motion by Councilwoman Belcher, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous roll call vote, council moved to confirm the check to W-L Construction & Paving, Inc., as stated above.

Mr. Ramey noted that this is only part of the city's paving projects and city administration hopes to start back in the spring.

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

Mayor Fawbush declared council in closed meeting.

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

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.

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

Mayor Fawbush opened the floor for two nominations to the Norton Tourism Committee for a four-year term to expire September 30, 2024.

Councilman Caruso nominated Mike Craft and Chris Jones to be reappointed to the Norton Tourism Committee for a four-year term to expire September 30, 2024.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mays, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved that the nominations cease.

Mayor Fawbush declared Mike Craft and Chris Jones to be reappointed to the Norton Tourism Committee for a four-year term to expire September 30, 2024.

In comments from the city manager:

City Administration provided council with a copy of the FY19 Audit.

Mr. Ramey said he informed council at the September 15<sup>th</sup> council meeting that the State Fire Marshall's office and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) had issued the blasting permits for the highwall removal on US 23. He said there have been six blasts so far and the contractor came by the office yesterday and thanked the Norton Police Department for assisting with traffic.

Mr. Ramey said the Cloudsplitter Ultra 100 Trail Race will take place October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> and that 193 participants had registered.

Mr. Ramey said one of the city's vendors incorporated the city logo into a new face mask and he distributed the new face covering to council members.

Mr. Ramey said for council's review he placed the latest COVID-19 pandemic metrics from LENOWISCO Health District, upcoming election information from the city registrar, and the High Knob traffic counts at each member's desk.

The following comments were made by council members:

Councilman Fultz asked if there was a theme for this year's Christmas parade. Mr. Ramey said yes and that he would report back to Councilman Fultz on the theme. Councilman Fultz stated that October 7<sup>th</sup> is the last day of the first nine weeks and noted that Norton City Schools was the first school in the state to open.

Councilman Mays stated that he heard the school system was working on virtual snow days.

Councilman Fultz said that is correct and now the school division knows definitively the last day of school.

Councilwoman Belcher said she noticed the traffic count for High Knob is higher.

Councilwoman Belcher stated that the number of COVID-19 cases has increased and she is hopeful everything will work out. She noted that she heard our area is late for contracting COVID-19.

Councilman Caruso said he was informed that the Town of Appalachia no longer has a police department and asked Police Chief James Lane if that was accurate.

Chief Lane said the county is currently in discussions with the Town of Appalachia to take over policing the town.

Mr. Ramey explained that part of this issue is financial.

Councilman Caruso said the audit is getting larger and he requested a maximum 2-page executive summary of the audit from the auditors for council members.

Mr. Ramey said the auditor did a summary presentation but she did not do one in writing.

Mayor Fawbush provided council with a handout that had a list of topics he would like to discuss at a future meeting. The list included: discussion of a downtown sidewalk ordinance; pop-up vendors obtaining a business license and providing sales tax information; Airbnb's obtaining a business license and paying transient occupant tax; pressure washing all the old downtown sidewalk and the rock wall that runs along 900 block of Park Avenue S.W; the creation of a Norton downtown business association; and repairing the benches in Veteran's Park. Mayor Fawbush asked council to look at these ideas and be thinking about what they would like to have included in a downtown sidewalk ordinance and the other items mentioned.

Mr. Ramey noted that wood for the benches in Veteran's Park had been ordered and came in last week and that Davis Nursey was looking at the landscaping to see what can be done to improve the area in Veteran's Park.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

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Joseph Fawbush, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Rebecca K. Coffey, Clerk of Council

**TEMPORARY ORDINANCE AMENDING NORTON CODE SECTION 23-2(C)  
DELAYING IMPOSITION OF INTEREST AND PENALTIES ON TAXES DUE  
OCTOBER 15, 2020 UNTIL NOVEMBER 15, 2020**

WHEREAS, the Norton City Code provides that the second semiannual installment of real estate taxes is due October 15, 2020 and full payment of tangible personal property tax and machinery and tools tax are also payable by October 15, 2020, and

WHEREAS, penalties and interest on such taxes begin to accrue on 2020 accounts not paid by such date, and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely and seriously affected the ability of taxpayers of the City to pay these taxes by October 15 and has also affected the ability of City staff to process tax payments in a timely fashion, and

WHEREAS, Council believes it to be in the best interest of the City and its taxpayers to suspend the penalty and interest provisions of Section 23-2 of the Code temporarily in order to relieve the difficulties caused by the pandemic to taxpayers and City staff.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That Section 23-2 (c) (1) be, and it is hereby amended by providing that for the tax year 2020 the penalty shall be set at zero (0) for the second semiannual payment of real estate taxes until November 15, 2020, but not thereafter.
2. That Section 23-2 (c) (3) be, and it is hereby amended by providing that for the tax year 2020, the penalty and interest rates shall be set at zero (0) for tangible personal property tax and machinery and tools tax until November 15, 2020, but not thereafter.
3. That this is and shall be a temporary ordinance expiring by its own terms at the close of City Hall office hours on November 15, 2020.
4. That this temporary amendment shall become effective immediately upon passage in view of the urgency of dealing with delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.



ADOPTED: OCTOBER 20, 2020

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MAYOR

ATTEST:

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CLERK

<u>VOTING</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Delores Belcher	_____	_____	_____
Robert Fultz, Jr.	_____	_____	_____
William Mays	_____	_____	_____
Joseph Fawbush	_____	_____	_____
Mark Caruso	_____	_____	_____



October 7, 2020

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The City Council of the City of Norton, Virginia will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 6:00 PM in the Municipal Council Chambers located at 618 Virginia Avenue, N.W., Norton, Virginia. The purpose of the hearing is to solicit input on a proposed amendment to Sec. 23-2(c) of the City Code. The proposed amendment is intended to reduce the penalty and interest rates on taxes due October 15, 2020 to 0.0% for the period beginning October 15, 2020 and ending on November 15, 2020, at which time the provisions of the proposed amendment shall expire unless further extended by Council.

Information regarding the proposed amendment is Available for Inspection Monday through Friday between 8:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. in the City Manager's Office or available at [www.nortonva.gov](http://www.nortonva.gov). Attendance and Comments at the Meeting are Encouraged and Welcome.

Fred L. Ramey, Jr.

City Manager

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

TO THE COALFIELD:

Please run in the Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup> and Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup> editions of the Coalfield Progress.

# Inter-Office Memo



**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*  
**CC:**  
**Date:** October 16, 2020  
**Re:** High Knob Music Festival

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The High Knob Music Festival was not held this year due to COVID-19 however, the Festival Committee has been hard at work on making improvements that will benefit future festivals and events for years to come.

Thank You.



**OFFICE OF  
FIRE CHIEF**

**Norton Fire Department**

Municipal Building  
P.O. Box 141  
Norton, Virginia 24273

September 26, 2019

Mr. Fred Ramey Jr. City Manager  
City of Norton  
P.O. Box 618  
Norton, VA. 24273

Mr. Ramey:


Below is a list of appointed Norton Fire Department Officers for 2020/2021.

**WORKING OFFICERS**

Steve McElroy:	Assistant Chief (Operations)
Buddy Cash:	Assistant Chief (Administrative)
Marty Hagy:	Captain (Safety / Public Safety Education)
Billy Mays:	Captain (Special Operations)
Stephen McElroy:	Captain (Grants / Training)
Skipper Dorton:	Lieutenant (Equipment / Training)
Tim Couch:	Lieutenant (Apparatus / Training)
Greg Mays:	Lieutenant (LE Liaison / Training)
Paul Wheatley:	Lieutenant (Facilities / Training)

Please accept this list on behalf of the Norton Fire Department.  
If you should have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Todd Lagow  
Fire Chief

Sec. 8-38. - Working officers generally.

The working officers of the department shall be the chief, assistant chief, captain, two lieutenants, and such additional officers as shall be deemed necessary. With the exception of the chief, the working officers shall be appointed by the city council following the annual September meeting of the department and shall hold office one (1) year from the time of appointment. In the event of any vacancy, the city manager shall fill the same by appointment.

(Code 1975, § 6-26; Ord. of 11-13-90)

# Inter-Office Memo



**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*  
**CC:**  
**Date:** October 16, 2020  
**Re:** Update on Fire Department Equipment

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As part of the FY21 Fiscal Budget, the City Administration recommended to City Council that we authorize the Fire Department to begin making plans and estimate for the potential purchase a new fire truck. At this meeting, the City Administration and Fire Department will provide updates related to the equipment and potential funding sources for City Council's consideration.

Thank You.

# Inter-Office Memo



**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager *FR*  
**CC:**  
**Date:** October 16, 2020  
**Re:** CARES Act Funding

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Earlier this year, the Commonwealth of Virginia shared a portion of the \$3.1 billion funds that it received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 with counties and cities across the Commonwealth. At this meeting, I plan to share an update on recent use of the CARES funds and the City Administration's plans moving forward.

Thank You.

154581

INV. DATE	INVOICE#	G/L ACCT. #	GROSS AMOUNT	DISC. AMOUNT	NET AMOUNT
8/21/2020	2013A 08/	40-020-14100-5606103,279.39		.00	103,279.39

**COPI**

9/01/2020	6767	154581	103,279.39	.00	103,279.39
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<b>CITY OF NORTON</b>		<b>154581</b>	
<b>GENERAL OPERATING FUND</b>		68-48514	
NORTON, VA 24273		154581 10	
FIRST BANK & TRUST COMPANY			
103 THOUSAND 279 DOLLARS 39 CENTS			
<b>PAY TO THE ORDER OF:</b>		<b>AMOUNT</b>	
U. S. BANK OPERATIONS CNTR		\$*103279.39	
P.O. BOX 86 LOCKBOX		DATE	
SERVICES SDS 12-2699		9/01/2020	
MINNEAPOLIS			
MN 55486-2699		AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE	
		<i>[Signature]</i>	
		Security Features included	
		Details on Back	