

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Joseph Fawbush presiding.

Present: Chris Jones, Stacy Salyers, Robert Fultz, Jr., Mark Caruso and Joseph Fawbush

Also Present: Fred L. Ramey, Jr., City Manager and Clerk, and City Attorney Matthew R. Dotson

The invocation was given by Rev. Ronnie Large, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by City of Norton Emergency Management Coordinator and Fire Chief Todd Lagow.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt the minutes of the January 3, 2023, organizational council meeting as presented.

Upon a motion by Councilman Salyers, seconded by Councilman Jones, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt the minutes of the January 3, 2023, council meeting as presented.

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

Council had been presented with an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a School Safety Officer (SSO) for Norton Elementary and Middle School (NEMS). A draft of the MOU was discussed at the January 3, 2023, council meeting and some additions were recommended.

The consensus of council at that meeting was to authorize the school system to move forward with hiring a School Safety Officer with the understanding that the MOU with suggested additions would be officially considered by council at the January 17, 2023, council meeting. The MOU additions pertained to the training requirements and job duties for the SSO and the School Resource Officer (SRO) required by the Code of Virginia.

There were no questions from council.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Salyers, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding for a School Safety Officer for Norton Elementary and Middle School as presented.

The city manager said Mark Stapperfenne of Virginia Beach, Virginia, was present to request permission from council to host a longboarding event called The Woodbooger Freeride in the City of Norton along Route 619 on May 20 and 21, 2023. He advised that Mr. Stapperfenne and Emily Pross, a 7-time downhill world champion, had worked with city administration for a couple of months regarding the potential event and Mr. Stapperfenne was present to provide an overview of longboarding and the proposed event.

Mr. Ramey said the city during the last 10 to 12 years has tried to capitalize on its assets and has been successful in doing so with unique events such as the High Knob Hellbender, the Cloudsplitter 100, and the Sports Car Club of America Hill Climb. He noted that for most of these events organizers contacted the city because of the city's natural assets.

The city manager then turned the presentation over to Mr. Stapperfenne.

Noting that Norton has a world-class road in its backyard and City Manager Fred Ramey has been the most responsive of anyone he has worked with when planning an event, Mr. Stapperfenne expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to address council. Via PowerPoint

and video presentations, the Faceplant Boardriders-sponsored downhill gravity sports athlete enlightened council on the sport of longboarding and discussed the potential event. He said he is working to make a soon-to-be Olympic sport more accessible and explained that there is a booming population of longboarders in the Appalachians.

Mr. Stapperfenne discovered Norton's Route 619 through online Google Maps and after contacting Mr. Ramey, organizers began to realize the potential for a longboarding free ride event on Route 619. He discussed potential plans for the expert-level entry, invitation-only event which would begin at the Norton Reservoir parking lot with corner marshals at designated locations along Route 619. The event would be a freeride with no competition or time trials.

Official event components would include permission from council, event insurance, a Virginia Department of Transportation permit, and Woodbooger name/trademark authorization in naming the event The Woodbooger Freeride. Additional event planning/promotional details and the future possibility of the event becoming an International Downhill Federation sanctioned race were discussed.

He asked if council had any questions.

Council inquired about the number of participants and how many times participants would travel down the mountain.

Mr. Stapperfenne said he envisions 80 to 200 participants, but numbers still have to be determined. He said participants would probably go down the mountain 10-15 times both days, with the event starting around 9 a.m., breaking for lunch, and ending at 5 p.m.

The city manager said the event would mirror the SCCA Hill Climb model of intermittent Route 619 road closures.

Mr. Stapperfenne requested permission from council to conduct the event on Route 619 and authorization to use the Woodbooger service mark in the event name, calling the event The Woodbooger Freeride.

Discussion followed about if the event would be open to local longboarders, the possibility of spectators, if there would be downtown activities associated with the event, and if the event would be videoed and photographed.

The event organizer said the event would be an expert-level event that would be centered around safety. He said the possibility of spectators, downtown/area event-associated activities, videography and photography would be discussed. Mr. Stapperfenne said live video of the event could be investigated and adequate lodging opportunities exist for the event.

Mr. Ramey advised that the requested event dates of May 20 and 21, 2023, fit in the city calendar of events and the next important steps would be insurance and the VDOT permit.

Upon a motion by Councilman Salyers, seconded by Councilman Fultz, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to authorize the city manager to issue a Special Use Permit to Mr. Stapperfenne to use the Woodbooger name/service mark for a longboarding free ride event called The Woodbooger Freeride, to be held May 20 and May 21, 2023, on Route 619 in Norton. The motion also authorized intermittent closure of Route 619 during the event and included the understanding that city administration and Mr. Stapperfenne would continue to work together on event planning associated with safety, permits, etc.

Included on the agenda for council consideration was a Collaborative Adoption Agreement with DePaul Community Resources and Norton Department of Social Services (NDSS).

After providing council with background information on the agreement, Mr. Ramey said Norton Department of Social Services Director Abe Rutherford was out of town and unable to attend the meeting. The city manager explained that the purpose of the agreement was to

document the commitment between DePaul Community Resources and NDSS to work collaboratively to increase the adoption of children in foster care.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Jones, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to authorize NDSS Director Abe Rutherford to endorse a Collaborative Adoption Agreement with DePaul Community Resources and Norton Department of Social Services as presented.

Council was also asked to consider acceptance of a Deed of Easement for Utilities that was prepared by former City Attorney William Bradshaw.

The city manager explained that the Deed of Easement is associated with Project Intersection in the Hawthorne Drive area and addresses current and future drainage infrastructure maintenance.

Mr. Dotson said the easement solutions for the drainage were permanent in nature and the Deed of Easement included a temporary aspect of paving.

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Salyers, and passed by unanimous vote, council moved to approve the Deed of Easement for Utilities as presented.

Also included in packets for council consideration was a transfer to Norton City Schools, dated September 26, 2022, in the amount of \$200,000 to cover September 2022 payroll expenditures.

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

Upon a motion by Councilman Fultz, seconded by Councilman Caruso, 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.

Mayor Fawbush declared council in closed meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, 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.

Mr. Ramey polled each member of council as to the Certification of Closed Meeting with each answering yes. The city manager then read A Resolution of the Certification of Closed Meeting.

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

Mayor Fawbush opened the floor for nominations for appointment to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five-year term to expire January 17, 2028.

Councilman Caruso nominated T. J. Flanary to be reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five-year term to expire January 17, 2028.

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

The mayor declared T. J. Flanary reappointed to the Building Code Board of Appeals for a five-year term to expire January 17, 2028.

Mayor Fawbush opened the floor for nominations for two appointments to the Norton Redevelopment & Housing Authority for four-year terms to expire January 28, 2027.

Councilman Salyers nominated Renee Robinson and T. J. Flanary to be reappointed to the Norton Redevelopment & Housing Authority for four-year terms to expire January 28, 2027.

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

The mayor declared Renee Robinson and T. J. Flanary reappointed to Norton Redevelopment & Housing Authority for four-year terms to expire January 28, 2027.

Mayor Fawbush opened the floor for nominations for four appointments to the Highway Safety Commission for two-year terms to expire January 31, 2025.

Councilman Jones nominated Steve McElroy, Gary Call and Cody McElroy, to be reappointed to the Highway Safety Commission for two-year terms to expire January 31, 2025.

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

The mayor declared Steve McElroy, Gary Call, and Cody McElroy reappointed to the Highway Safety Commission for two-year terms to expire January 31, 2025.

Mayor Fawbush opened the floor for nominations for two appointments to the Norton Rescue Squad for one-year terms to expire February 1, 2024.

Councilman Fultz nominated William Mays be reappointed and Stacy Salyers be appointed to the Norton Rescue Squad for one-year terms to expire February 1, 2024.

Upon a motion by Councilman Caruso, seconded by Councilman Jones, and passed by the following vote: YES – Jones, Fultz, Caruso and Fawbush, NO – None, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Salyers, council moved that the nominations cease.

The mayor declared William Mays reappointed to the Norton Rescue Squad and Stacy Salyers appointed to the Norton Rescue Squad for one-year terms to expire February 1, 2024.

In comments from the city manager:

On behalf of city administration, the city manager welcomed City Attorney Matthew Dotson to the City of Norton team. Noting that he and Mr. Dotson had already been working on several projects, he said he is planning to schedule a day for Mr. Dotson to meet with city department heads to discuss ongoing and upcoming projects. He said Mr. Dotson was doing a great job and he appreciated having Mr. Dotson onboard.

Mr. Ramey informed council that the City Charter Amendment made the first step through a house subcommittee.

He reminded council that the deadline for annual financial disclosure statement submission to the city clerk is February 1, 2023. Failure to submit those by that date will result in a \$250 penalty assessed by the Commonwealth Attorney's Office.

Mr. Ramey provided 2022 City Administration Highlights and distributed copies of the January 2023 Retail Sales Tax Report for council review.

In comments from the city attorney:

Mr. Dotson expressed his appreciation to the mayor and council for the opportunity to serve the City of Norton and said he looked forward to serving.

The following comments were made by council members:

Noting that he was excited about the events that are being held on the mountain, Councilman Jones said one of the things the Tourism Committee suggested several years ago was a Litter Control Program. He said he would like this program readdressed and presented council with a handout.

He said he met with Mr. Blake Salyer and discussed some ideas for downtown Norton.

Councilman Salyers, Councilman Fultz and Mayor Fawbush welcomed Mr. Dotson and expressed their appreciation for his service to the City of Norton, with other council members concurring.

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA



Joseph Fawbush, Mayor

ATTEST:



Fred Ramey, Jr., Clerk of Council