

June 26, 1952

The town council reconvened at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, June 26th in the temporary town hall with Mayor B.E. Ball presiding.

All members of council were present and answered to roll call except Jack T. Helms.

The Mayor opened the meeting by reading the following statement which he stated was the consensus of the feeling concerning the municipal construction and the 1952-53 budget.

#28

Mr. Ball then read a statement of his personal views concerning the financial and general condition of the Town of Norton.

#29

1. That the destruction of the Town Hall was a major calamity, coming as it did, just at the time all of us were making every effort to get the new school building finished and the viaduct across the railroads built. We all regret deeply that it happened.

2. That our town is still in good financial condition. Our bonded indebtedness has all been met when due. That all outstanding bonds with the exception of the school bonds will have been paid off in the next three years, at which time a large slice of the school bonds will have been paid.

3. That during a short few years, while carrying on all functions of our town government, we have been able to make large contributions to capital improvements and equipment. We built a new, modern filter plant at a cost of \$100,000. We made excavations at the reservoir, providing storage space for 6 million more gallons of water, at a cost of \$12,000. A total of \$75,000 was spent in providing a modern and well lighted stadium and athletic field and play ground. We built a modern lock-up or jail, meeting all State Correction Board specifications at a cost of \$26,000. We have placed in the hands of the School Board \$25,000 to assist in its building program. We have set aside in the bank \$125,000 as our part of the construction of the viaduct. We provided East Norton with a main trunk line water system at a cost of \$17,000. We have purchased a new 750 gallon per minute fire truck and pumping unit, and have \$8,000 set aside for it, with the additional amount required in this years budget. \$12,000 has been expended for new street work equipment. And now we are ready to begin a new year's work, with our debts paid when due, our credit still good, and a bank balance of \$40,000.

4. That in all this time and for 14 years our regular tax rate has increased only 10 cents on the \$100.00 and the water rent has increased only five cents on the 1000 gallons - and, that we still have the lowest tax rate in Wise County towns. We still believe you get more for your tax dollar right here in Norton than in any place else you spend it.

5. You tell me we cannot afford a new Town Hall? ----- Ladies and Genetlemen -- I, for one, simply do not believe any such thing. We need it. We can have it; not today, not next month - but over a period of a few months we can have it right on this spot and paid for. If I were a lawyer, that would be my argument and I believe I'd get a favorable verdict.

Mayor Ball then called for any comments from the floor after which Fred Haislip, Sol Cury and J.M. Yearly were heard and spoke favorably concerning the 1952 budget and the proposals as outlined at the first part of the meeting.

#30

A motion prevailed that the opening remarks of Mr. Ball which reflected council's consensus of opinion on the 1952-53 budget and the proposed special levy be incorporated in the minutes.

#31

1. That the 1952-53 budget as previously presented be finally adopted.
2. That the Town Manager be instructed by the Council to make every effort to effect savings in certain categories of the budget of at least 5% of the whole.
3. That the regular tax rate remain at \$1.50 on each \$100.00 of real estate, personal property and other tangible property.
4. That the proposed \$1.00 special tax levy on real estate, personal property and other tangible property for the construction of the new Town Hall be reduced to 50¢ for the fiscal year 1952-53 with the provision that it is fully understood and agreed by all councilmen and councilman elect Cury that an additional 50¢ per hundred be levied for the year 1953-54 and that an additional small amount be levied for the year 1954-55 if found to be absolutely necessary to finish construction of the Town Hall.
5. That Town Manager McCord be empowered to hire Charles McElroy to finish architectural work and drawing for the permanent building at once.
6. That the plans to be so drawn as to meet the minimum needs of the town for a number of years, at an estimated cost of not more than \$100,000.00 when finished.
7. That McCord shall proceed as soon as expedient to have constructed the following sections of the building on their permanent location:
  1. Furnace and coal storage space to heat the Jail, the Fire equipment storage garage, and the temporary office.
  2. Permanent fire equipment garage in rough finish with necessary heating equipment to meet requirements.
  3. That the present structure being used as temporary Town office be improved and heated as cheaply as possible in order that it might be comfortably used in the winter 1952-53.
8. That in the spring of 1953 when additional funds, below listed are becoming available, the balance of the permanent structure be begun and finished as funds are available and without strain on other Town functions and that the following funds be made available for the work:
  1. \$19,000 insurance recover funds for the construction of heating room and fire hall section, 1952.
  2. \$10,000 additional fire insurance fund in the bank.
  3. \$13,000 to be received of the 1952-53 50¢ tax levy.
  4. \$13,000 to be received of the 1953-54 50¢ levy.
  5. \$10,000 refund from the Water Department 1953-54.
  6. \$23,000 from the surplus of 1952-53 and previous years.
9. That if necessary a reasonable bank loan be secured on anticipated revenue for the fiscal year 1953-54.
10. That Town Hall construction work be carried on in the most economical manner consistent with good design, the cheapest of substantial fire proof material and of sound construction. This work to proceed in the manner of construction as ordered by council.
11. The Council again expresses complete confidence in the School Board in their construction program and further urges them to advance the new school construction as rapidly as possible with the funds now available and additional funds that are in sight as previously set forth.
12. That the Council accept the offer of the Volunteer Fire Department to perform the finish work on the Fire Equipment Hall and Recreation Room. Likewise Council acknowledge with gratitude the offer of the Community Club House Organization to finish under supervision of the Town Manager the assembly room on the second floor.
13. That the Council acknowledge with thanks the offer of Mrs. C. Smith Seal and associates to assist finish & promotion of the Public Library provided for in the plans.

14. In conclusion the Council wishes to express wholehearted thanks to those citizens, taxpayers and interested friends who supplied the great amount of constructive criticism which has been received. The Council is aware that without such constructive criticism it would not be able to adequately function.

A motion prevailed on roll call vote with all members in attendance voting YEA that the 1952-53 budget be adopted as proposed for preliminary adoption.

#32

A motion was made and prevailed on roll call vote with all members in attendance voting YEA that a 50¢ levy on each \$100.00 of real estate, personal and other tangible property be levied for fiscal year 1952-53.

#33

There being no further business before the council same adjourned.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk