

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Norton City Council was held on Tuesday, October 7, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers with Mayor Robert Raines presiding.

Present: Joseph Hunnicutt, Jack Wallace, Robert Raines, William Mays, and Joseph Fawbush

Also Present: E. W. Ward, City Manager and Bill Bradshaw, City Attorney

The invocation was given by Father Tim Drake and was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Fire Chief D. C. Mullins.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt the minutes of the September 16, 2008 meeting as presented.

22052

During the Mayor's call for visitors, Carol Doss, Coordinator of the Upper Tennessee River Round Table and the Keep Southwest Virginia Beautiful agencies and Michele Knox, City of Norton Parks and Recreation Director, came forward. Ms. Doss advised that she would like to present to Ms. Knox and the City of Norton a plaque for their efforts in recycling, litter prevention, and beautification. Ms. Knox accepted this award on behalf of the City.

22053

Mayor Raines, on behalf of Council, thanked Ms. Knox for the work she is doing in these areas and thanked Ms. Doss for the award.

At this time, Mayor Raines recognized Roger Ramey, Director of the City of Norton Department of Social Services. Mayor Raines commended Mr. Ramey for the re-establishment of the Social Services Advisory Board, which had been defunct for some time.

22054

Mr. Ramey spoke briefly to Council regarding his staff and the work that they were doing, especially with other City agencies such as the Police Department and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Mayor Raines, on behalf of Council, thanked Mr. Ramey for the job both he and his employees were doing for the citizens of Norton.

Tonight's "Looking Back" series, which honors Mayor Raines and Councilman Wallace, is on the topic of Economic Development.

Mr. Ramey, Assistant City Manager and Planning Director for the City had prepared a PowerPoint presentation on this topic.

He advised that, in 1988-1989, the City had a total of \$1,253,828 as a financial baseline. Council was faced with a deteriorating downtown. Council then came up with an Economic Development Plan, which included a Downtown Revitalization Plan. This plan covered the purchase and renovation of various properties in the City, such as the old Piggly Wiggly Building and the Hotel Norton, and, through a newly instituted recruitment campaign, brought new businesses and approximately 350 new jobs into the City. These new businesses included the Bell Atlantic Directory Assistance Center, the

AT&T Virginia Relay Center, Crutchfield Corporation, Logisticare, and Website Pros. Also during this downtown renovation, it became apparent that there was a need for parking and several properties were bought and eventually became parking lots that serve the business district of the City. The City's Facade Program began in 1989 and 25 grant applications have been awarded to businesses throughout the downtown area.

22055

During the timeframe of 1988 to the present, Council began to be active in the establishment of commercial development and the City had the Virginia-Kentucky Regional Shopping Center, Norton Commons Shopping Center, and the development of several hotels, and the new Norton Cinema. All of these different programs initiated by Council resulted in the substantial increase in revenues for the City, with a 2006-2007 financial baseline of \$3,879,712, and a vast difference in the appearance of buildings in the business areas of the City.

Mayor Raines and Councilman Wallace both thanked Mr. Ramey for this presentation.

The City Manager gave Council an update on the water reserves of the City. As of October 2, 2008, the City had approximately 67 million gallons in combined reservoir capacity. The City is still purchasing 325,000 gallons of water daily from the Wise County Public Service Authority and the Town of Big Stone Gap. There have been some issues with purchasing water from Big Stone Gap due to problems on their system; however, we are again purchasing from them.

22056

The City Administration will continue to monitor the situation and keep Council informed.

In their packets, Council had A Proclamation to Designate the Week of October 20-26, 2008 as Pastoral Care Week in the City.

Mayor Raines advised Council had been requested to adopt this proclamation in order that area pastors may receive recognition for their services provided to patients and their families in area hospitals.

22057

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by William Mays, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to adopt A Proclamation to Designate the Week of October 20-26, 2008 as Pastoral Care Week. (Insert)

Present at tonight's meeting was Fire Chief D. C. Mullins and members of the Norton Fire Department. Chief Mullins presented Council with a list of the working officers of the Department for the year 2008-2009 fiscal year.

According to Section 8-38 of the Norton City Code, the working officers of the Department must be appointed by the City Council. Fire Chief Mullins respectively submitted to Council the names of those individuals who were elected by the Fire Department.

22058

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to appoint the individuals whose names were provided by Chief Mullins as the working officers of the Norton Fire Department for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

At this time, Chief Mullins spoke briefly to Council regarding the retirement of Mayor Raines and Councilman Wallace. He advised that Council had always been supportive of the Fire Department and the members of the Department wished to present to both Mayor

Raines and Councilman Wallace a plaque. Assistant Fire Chiefs Steve McElroy and Marty Hagy then presented these plaques.

Mayor Raines and Councilman Wallace each thanked the individuals in the Fire Department for these plaques and praised the Department for the work done by them for the citizens of Norton.

In their packets, Council had a letter from Dennis Brummitte, Captain of the Norton Rescue Squad, requesting the City's support for the implementation of a Revenue Recovery Program. Speaking on behalf of the Norton Rescue Squad was Todd Lagow, the City's Emergency Services Coordinator. Mr. Lagow also will discuss the implementation of the same program for the Norton Fire Department with billing to homeowners insurance companies and car insurance companies.

Mr. Lagow advised that this program has been implemented in other entities within the County and State. If sanctioned, the program would allow the Rescue Squad to bill the hospitalization of those using their services. Those who do not have hospitalization will receive services and no billing will be done. Not having insurance does not affect one's usage of the services of the Rescue Squad. Billing will be done by a private company and a fiscal agent will be determined at a later time.

22059

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by William Mays, seconded by Joseph Hunnicutt, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to endorse the concept of a Revenue Recovery Program for the Norton Rescue Squad. As far as endorsement for the Norton Fire Department, Mayor Raines advised that this item will be referred to the City Manager and the City Attorney to research in order to see how the City should proceed on this.

Council had a request for a water tap for Christopher Joseph Peters in the Josephine area of Wise County.

At this time, Councilman Hunnicutt advised that he would abstain from discussion or vote on this item as Mr. Peters is one of his clients.

Upon a motion by Jack Wallace, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by the following vote: YES – Wallace, Raines, Mays, Fawbush, ABSENT – None, ABSTAIN – Hunnicutt, Council moved to approve one water tap for Christopher Joseph Peters in the Josephine section of Wise County.

22060

Mayor Raines advised that the Virginia Municipal League Conference will be held October 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> and that several members of Council will be attending. October 21<sup>st</sup> is the next regularly scheduled meeting date of Council. He further advised that City offices will be closed on Election Day, November 4<sup>th</sup>, and that, too, is a regularly scheduled meeting date of Council. He is proposing that these two meetings be cancelled and to schedule a meeting on Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.

22061

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Jack Wallace, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to cancel the regularly scheduled meetings of October 21<sup>st</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup> and to schedule a meeting on Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.

Council had been presented in their packets a copy of an electronic transfer of \$160,000 to the Norton City Schools and a copy of a check in the amount of \$111,915.63

made payable to the U. S. Bank Operations Center covering a payment on the City's fire trucks.

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Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous roll call, Council moved to approve a wire transfer to the Norton City Schools in the amount of \$160,000 and a check in the amount of \$111, 915.63 to the U. S. Bank Operations Center covering a payment on the City's fire trucks.

At this time, Mayor Raines advised that the Regional Jail Authority Board has three members from each locality. The City Manager, City Sheriff, and Mayor serve on this Board for the City. Mayor Raines stated the City needs to appoint an alternate to this Board as there are times when he is unable to attend these meetings. He would like to see the Vice Mayor, Mr. Mays, appointed as such.

22063

Upon a motion by Joseph Hunnicutt, seconded by Joseph Fawbush, and passed by unanimous vote, Council moved to appoint Vice Mayor Mays as an alternate to the Regional Jail Authority Board to attend meetings when the Mayor is unable to do so.

There were no comments from the City Manager or the City Attorney.

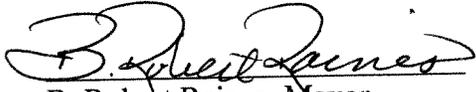
22064

Mayor Raines expressed appreciation to the members of the Fire Department for staying for the entire meeting.

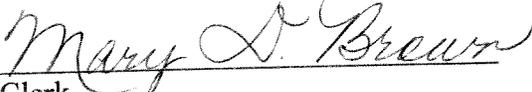
22065

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

CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA

  
B. Robert Raines, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Clerk